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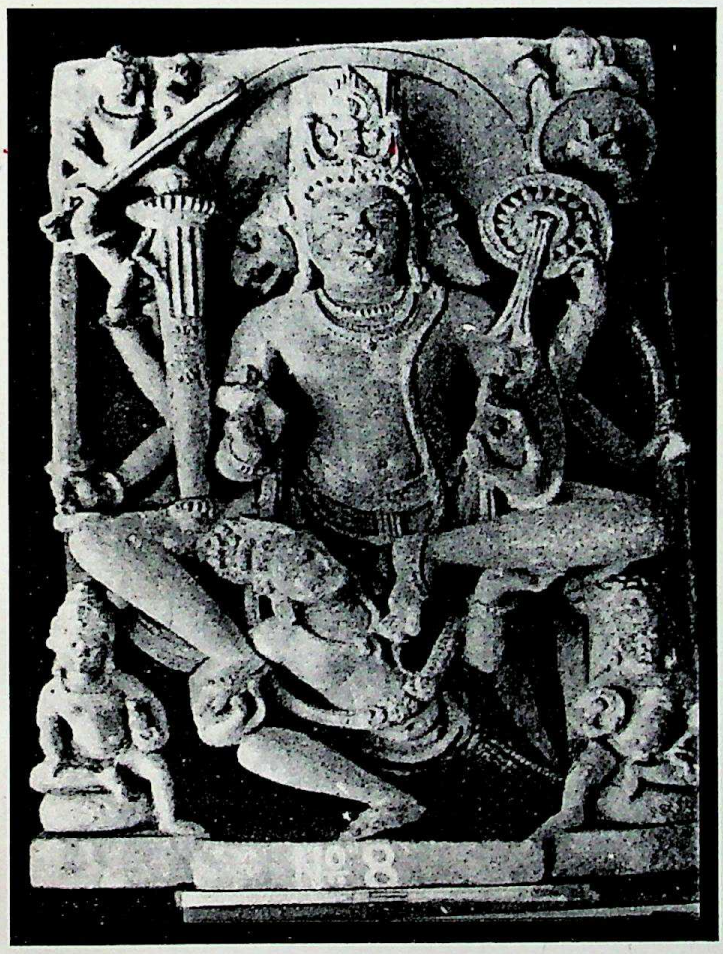

Vaikuṇṭha Viṣṇu with Garuḍa

[See Prof. G. B. Degkurkar's Article on Pages No.21-32]

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VADODARA

THE MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA
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FROM VEDIC RUDRA TO PURANIC ŚIVA

Sachidananda Mahapatra*

I. PROLOGUE:

The Vedas are the most sacred scriptures of ancient India and are considered to be the store- houses of all types of knowledge. From the ancient time till date, people who have deep faith and love towards Indian tradition and culture, do believe that, the Veda is not written by any human being but it is an invaluable gift of the Supreme Being for the welfare of the human race[1]. The Veda is such a knowledge *par excellence* which crept into divine mind of the seers, when they were in deep meditations and thus revealed itself through them[2]. This was such an unparallel speech which came out from the unknown and pointless, and enter into the cave of the seers, who were as divine as the Supreme Lord. Later these seers made themselves the real knowers of this Vedic knowledge.

The Purāṇas are the very important branches of the Hindu sacred literature which enable us to know the true import of the ethos, philosophy and religion of the Vedas. They clothe with flesh and blood the bony framework of the *Dharma Śāstra* without which the mere life-force of the Vedas cannot function with effect. They are primarily extensions, amplifications and illustrations in a popular manner of the spiritual truths declared in the Vedas. The Purāṇas have in fact been described by the *Upaniṣads* as the fifth Veda[3] and by the Smṛtis as the exposition of what the Vedic seers realized. In the Vedas, Rudra is attributed a less number of *sūktas* in comparison to Agni and Indra and so regarded as a less significant

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1. अपौरुषेयं वाक्यं वेदः इति सायणः ।
   Cf. तस्मात् नास्ति वेदस्य पौरुषेयत्वम् । पौरुषेयं न वा वेदवाक्यं स्यात्पौरुषेयता । *Rgvedabhāṣyabhūmikā*, Ed. By V.K. Verma, Choukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, Third Edition, 1980, p. 61.
2. तामन्वविन्दन् ऋषिषु प्रविष्टाम् । RV. X. 79.3, *Rgveda Saṁhitā* Ed. by K.L. Joshi, Choukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi, 2000.
3. पुराणं पञ्चमो वेदः । *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 7.1.1. included in *Upaniṣadsaṅgraha*, Ed. by Pt. Jagdish Shastri, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, First Edition, 1970.

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deity there. On the contrary, god Śiva who is nothing but an extended, amplified and glorified form of the Vedic Rudra, occupies a very high position later in the Puranic literature. Hence, in this paper, an humble attempt is made to focus some light on the gradual development of the concept of Rudra, then the concept of Rudra-Śiva in Vedas, and finally the concept of Śiva in the Puranic literature.

II. ETYMOLOGY AND MEANING OF RUDRA AND ŚIVA

Now, so far as the etymology of the word, Rudra is concerned, it seems somewhat uncertain with regard to its meaning. It is generally derived from the root '*rud*'- to cry. The famous etymologist Yāska has derived the word from the same root *rud- roditīti rudra*.[4] So the meaning of Rudra according to this derivation is that He is the god of howling, crying, roaring or terrible to his enemies. *Ācārya* Sāyaṇa has suggested no less than six derivations of the same in his commentary. He is called Rudra because He makes everyone weep (*rodayati*) at the destruction of the world; or being '*rut*' means the suffering caused by the world. He drives away (*drāvayati*), removes or destroys that and so he is named as Rudra; or *rut* signifies language composed of words, or the science of soul which is to be explained by it; this he gives (*rāti*) to his worshippers and therefore he is designated as Rudra etc.[5] but the problem is that the word '*rudra*' is also used as an epithet of some other Vedic gods like Agni (in III.2.5) and Soma (in VII. 72.3) etc. in the *Rgveda* for which he is identified variously by the Vedic scholars in the past. Suryakanta, in his *Practical Vedic Dictionary*, has given another probable derivation of Rudra from the root *rudh* 'to be red or active'. It is just like from *Kṣudh* to *Kṣudra* so also from *Rudh* to Rudra.[6] If we accept this derivation, the meaning may be that Rudra is called so on account of His being red or active. This seems to be supported by the '*Śatarudrīya*' of the '*Śukla Yajurveda*'[7] where the complexion of Rudra is stated to be reddish brown. However, this derivation of Rudra is not widely accepted, rather the derivation given by Yäska seems to be more appropriate so far.

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4. Yāska *Niruktam* (*Daivatakāṇḍa*), Ed. by L. Sarup, Panini Vedic Granthamala, New Delhi, 1982.
5. रोदयति सर्वं अन्तकाले इति रुद्रः । यदा रुत् संसाराख्यं दुःखं तद् द्रावयति अपगमयति विनाशयति इति रुद्रः ।.....यदा रुत् शब्दात्मिका वाणी तत्प्रतिपाद्यात्म-विद्या, तम् उपासकेभ्यो राति ददातीति रुद्रः.... etc.(*Sāyaṇabhāṣya*) quoted by Chakravarti Mahadev in *The Concept of Rudra Śiva Through Ages*, p.5.
6. Suryakanta : *A Practical Vedic Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1981.
7. असौ यस्ताम्रो अरुण उत बभ्रुः सुमङ्गलः । ŚYV. 16.6a. *Yajurveda-Saṃhitā*, Ed. by S.D. Satavalekar, Svadhyaya Mandala, Pardi 1957.

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Now, the word, 'Śiva' which became very famous in the post-Ṛgvedic and especially in the Puranic period is found mostly as an epithet of not only Rudra[8] but also some other gods like Agni, Aśvinau and Soma etc. It is also quite surprising that the word Śiva has occurred more times for Agni and Indra than Rudra in the *Ṛgveda*. Anyway, the meanings of the word Śiva given in the Monier Williams Dictionary are: auspicious, propitious, gracious, favourable, benevolent, friendly and kindly etc. It is also stated there that Śiva is the name of the disintegrating or destroying and reproducing deity who constitutes the third god of the Hindu *Trimūrti*, the other two being Brahmā (the creator) and Viṣṇu (the preserver). Hence, in the Vedas, the only name of the destroying deity is Rudra. Similarly, '*A Dictionary of Hinduism*' states that the word 'Śiva' occurs frequently in the *Ṛgveda* as a propitiatory epithet applied to the storm-god Rudra, who is implored to look upon his suppliants with compassion.[9] According to the *Uṇādisūtra* i. 15.3, the word Śiva is derived from the root '*śī(śete)*-ti lie' and he is that in whom all things lie- '*ā samantāt śete asmin iti śiva*'.[10] The name Śiva is euphemistic and is used as an attributive epithet not particularly of Rudra, but of several other Vedic deities. One of the earliest uses of Śiva as proper name of Rudra is found in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*[11] in which the beginning of the cult of Rudra-Śiva can be traced.[12] Being an epithet of Rudra, gradually a joint name Rudra-Śiva was propitiated by the common people in the *Gṛhya* rites. And by the second centuary B.C. and as well as during the evolution of Purāṇas, the epithet Śiva had acquired a separate identity as an object of worship in India.[13]

III. THE FEATURES OF VEDIC RUDRA:

The Vedic Rudra seems to be more malevolent rather than benevolent in nature. In the *Ṛg*veda, he is described as a fierce god [14] like a terrible beast - '*mṛgam na bhīmam upahantumugram*'.[15] He is unassailable and unsurpassed in might.[16] This feature of Rudra is

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8. *Ṛgveda*, X. 92.9, *Ṛgveda Saṁhitā op. cit.*
9. Stuteley Margaret & James : *A Dictionary of Hinduism*, Heritage Publishers, 4C, Ansari Road, New Delhi 2, 1986.
10. Williams Monier : *A Sanskrit English Dictionary* , Oxford, 1970.
11. *Śveṭāśvataropaniṣad*. iii.11; iv. 14 included in *Upaniṣadsaṅgraha, op. cit.*
12. Chakaravarti Mahadeva : *The Concept of Rudra-Śiva Through Ages*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi (Reprint), 2002, p. 28.
13. Stutley Margaret & James : *A Dictionary of Hinduism, op. cit.* p. 254.
14. *Ṛgveda* II. 33.9; X.126.5.
15. *Ibid.* II.33.11a.
16. *Ibid*: VII. 46. 1.

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also supported by the both *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* [17] and *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā* where it in said that- *rudro vai krūro devānām.*[18] Rudra is very often referred to as having death-bringing missiles[19] and so implored not to slay and injure men and cattle, but, preserve the worshippers and their property unharmed.[20] What to say more, the very name of Rudra is frightening as stated in the *Ṛgveda.*[21]

Of course the Vedic Rudra is not exclusively malevolent; rather he is also represented as possessing some benevolent traits. He bestows blessings on his worshippers and looks after the welfare of men and beasts.[22] He sees to it that the people are welfed and free from diseases.[23] He is the best among the physicians-*bhiṣaktamaṁ tvā bhiṣajam śṛṇomi,*[24] whose remarkable remedies are often praised by the Vedic poets. The epithet like *Jalāṣabheṣaja* is exclusively bestowed on him.[25] This double personality of Rudra as a maleficent demon and a beneficent physician at the same time, seems to have been regarded by the Vedic scholars as a special distinguishing feature of the god.

Besides, in the *Śatarudrīya-sūkta* of the *Śukla Yajurveda*, Rudra is invoked by one hundred names and all the floating conceptions regarding him are drawn together. The *Śatarudrīya* seems to be a fresh starting point for new developments and adds various disgraceful attributes like the lord of wanderers and thieves, the prowling rover, the lord of pilferers, robbers, pillagers and the cut-throats etc.[25a] to Rudra. Besides, he is designated here as *Paśupati* (Lord of beasts), *Nīlagrīva* (blue-necked), *Sitikaṇṭha* (white-throated) and *Giriśaya* (dweller in the mountain) etc. The range of Rudra in the *Śatarudrīya* becomes so wide that He is everywhere: in the stream and on the road, in the pool and the ditch, in the lake and river, in the pond and the well, in the abyss and the bank, in the cloud and the lightening, in the rain and the drought, in the wind and the house, in the dust and the mist, in the copse and the gully etc.[26] From a minor atmospheric god of the *Ṛgveda*, he now becomes

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17. *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, VI. 1.7.8; 2.3.2 Ed. by Satavalekar, 2nd Edn. Bombay, 1957.
18. *Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā* III.8.1. Ed. by Satavalekar, Aundh, 1942.
19. *Ṛgveda* II.33.10.
20. *Ibid.* I.114.7,8; VI. 46.2-4; II. 33.3.6.
21. गृणीमसि त्वेषं रुद्रस्य नाम । RV. II.33.8d
22. *Ṛgveda* I. 114.1,2; II.33.6 & I. 43.6
23. *Ibid.* I. 114.1.
24. *Ibid.*II. 3.4.
25. *Ibid* VIII. 29.5.
25a. *Śukla Yajurveda* XVI.21.
26. Chakravarti Mahadev : *The Concept of Rudra- Śiva Through Ages, op. cit.* p. 7.

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the lord of all quarters: of forests and fields, of trees and plants, of food and moving creatures. Herein lies the reason which rendered him in later times the omnipresent Supreme Lord of the Universe.[27]

Rudra is further elevated to a higher platform in the *Atharvaveda* which represents a transitional stage between the conception of Rudra in the *Ṛgveda* and the systematic philosophy of Shaivism in the *Śvetāśvatra Upaniṣad*. Here, Brahman is conceived as the *Vrātya* and Rudra is exalted as *Ekavrātya*, the *Vrātya par excellence*. The *Atharvaveda* speaks of seven attendants of *Ekavrātya* namely Bhava, Śarva, Paśupati, Urga, Rudra, Mahādeva and Īśāna- representing different regions of the earth. Although they appear as seven distinct deities, still they were allied to and were looked upon as different manifestations of *Ekavrātya*. Scholars opine that the *Vrātyas* are the early worshippers of Rudra-Śiva and the *Vrātya* cult was later developed as Shaivism.

According to Aufrecht, it was the period of *Brāhmaṇas*, when the old polytheism was in a condition of decline of Rudra and the new faith 'Shaivism' was gaining ground.[28] In fact, the power of Rudra is seen in the *Brāhmaṇas* at its height, because even the gods are afraid of him. The main subject of theosophical speculations in the *Brāhmaṇas*, centred round Prajāpati, but he is not a god of the people as Rudra is and this is indicated by the attention devoted to him in the *Aitareya, Kauṣītakī* and *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The *Brāhmaṇas* embody several stories regarding the birth of Rudra.

In the age of *Upaniṣads*, the sacrificial ceremony becomes useless and speculative knowledge attains importance and the concept of one God having different names was clearly personalized. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, a monument of theism, is one such metrical *Upaniṣad* where Brahman is occasionally identified with Rudra. In one passage[29], Rudra is represented as Maheśvara (Great God) among the gods (*Īśvaras*) and as the Supreme deity among the divinities. In another passage,[30] Rudra is mentioned as one who created *Brahman* and delivered the Vedas to him. The word '*Śiva*' in the Vedic hymn, was mostly used as an adjective and was attributed to more than one deity. In the *Śvetāśvatara-Upaniṣad*, the name Śiva occurs in

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27. *Ibid.* p. 7.

28. Ketih A. B. : *Ṛgveda Brāhmaṇa*, Harvard Oriental Series, 1925, P. 26.

29. तमीश्वराणां परमं महेश्वरं तं देवतानां परमं च दैवतम्। *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.* (Sve.Up.) VI. 7ab. *op.cit.*

30. यौ ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै। Śve. Up. VI. 18ab.

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several passages mainly as an attributive of Rudra[31] and the process of transforming adjective into noun for designating the cult God has already begun in the *Upaniṣads*.

The next stage in Vedic literature is represented by *Sūtras*. Here it is found that Rudra was still a violent hostile deity who had to be appeased. The *Āśvalāyana*, the *Śāṅkhāyana* and the *Pāraskara Gṛhyasūtras* describe in details the *Śūlagava* or spit-ox sacrifice to Rudra. That some traits of non-Aryan aboriginal religion have gone into the make–up of Śiva of later days is proved by the fact that this ceremony is to be performed at the outskirt of a village and its remains should not be brought into it, for this god will do harm to (human) creatures.[32] In the ritual, Rudra is marked out emphatically from the other gods.[33] Further, the *Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra*[34] prescribes the sick person to worship Rudra and purification by touching water is required after prayers or making offerings to him. All these show that in the *Sūtra*-period Rudra was not within the orthodox pantheon due to his gradual association with the non-Aryan customs and deities. He was accepted by some but not by others.

IV. THE FEATURES OF PURANIC ŚIVA:

The Vedic Rudra gradually became Śiva and in the Purāṇas, he is only Śiva and no more Rudra. It can be important to note here that out of the eighteen Purāṇas, six are usually known as *Śaiva Purāṇas*. They are *Śiva* or *Vāyu*. *Liṅga*. *Skanda*, *Agni*, *Matsya* and *Kūrmapurāṇa*. The *Vāyupurāṇa* largely emphasizes the worship of Śiva. In some of the lists of important Purāṇas, the name of *Vāyupurāṇa* is sometimes taken by the *Śivapurāṇa*. The *Skandapurāṇa* contains stories about the births of Pārvatī, Gaṇeśa and Skanda along with the marriage of Pārvatī with Lord Śiva. Skanda's representation as Śiva's manifestation, is highly successful in this *Purāṇa*. The *Liṅgapurāṇa* gives the philosophy of the worship of Śiva in his form-cum-formless symbol, the *liṅga*. In the *Agnipurāṇa*, the emphasis is on the glory of Śiva, but descriptions of the glories of Viṣṇu also occur here. The *Matsyapurāṇa* gives a

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31. सर्वव्यापी स भगवान् तस्मात्सर्वगतः शिवः । Śve.Up III.11d.
विश्वस्यैकं परिवेष्टितारं ज्ञात्वा शिवं शान्तिमत्यन्तमेति । Śve.Up IV.14cd.
32. *Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*. IV, 8.32, Ed. by R.S. Bawa, V.V.I.S.I.S., Hoshiarpur, 1986.
33. Keith A.B: *Religion and Philosophy of Veda and Upaniṣad*, Harvard Oriental Series, 1925, p. 145.
34. *Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra* I. 10.9 ; V.6.1-2., Meherchand Laxmandass, Delhi, 1978.

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detailed account of Śiva's destruction of Andhakāsura, a demon who being protected by a boon, began to harass the gods.

Now, so far as the features of Śiva as described in the aforesaid Purāṇas are concerned,- he is the Supreme *Brahman* from which the creation started. According to some Purāṇas, he is the origin of even Viṣṇu and Brahmā-the others two gods of the *Trimūrti* concept. One of the distinguished features of Śiva, is that he is worshipped in two ways- one in the form of *bera* i.e the anthropomorphic image and other in the form of *liṅga*, the symbolic image while all other deities of the Hindu pantheon are worshipped in the form of idols only. And his worship in the form of *liṅga* is much more important than the worship in the anthropomorphic form. The *Śivapurāṇa*(SP) points out that Śiva- worship without *liṅga* is thoroughly fruitless. Lord Śiva is of the nature of *Brahman* without parts and so formless. In the language of the SP, he is *brahmarūpa. niṣkala* and *nirākāra*. Though Śiva is looked upon as being *sakala* and *sākāra* and he is worshipped in the form of *bera*, his *liṅgapujā* is primary while his *bera* form is secondary as stated in the same *Purāṇa*(SP).[35]

The *liṅgapuja* or the worship of *liṅga* is in fact is the essence of the *Śaiva* theology. And as such, many wonderful *Śaiva* temples enshrining the *Śivaliṅgas,* are found in every part of the country and outside. The worship of the *liṅga* in India is pre-epic, wherein the epic heroes-Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Pāṇḍavas are found worshipping the *liṅga* as a symbol of Śiva. *Linga* symbolizes the Supreme Śiva in various Purāṇas and *Śaivāgamas.* It comprehends within itself all the gods and is the seat of the entire creation and dissolution of the universe.[36] According to *Śaivāgamas, liṅga* provides the base for the three cosmic actions of creation, substance and dissolution.[37]

The concept of *liṅga* in the *Śivapurāṇa*(SP) is noteworthy from the following two aspects. First the *Liṅgāvirbhāva* legend which occurs five times in the *Purāṇa* with variations of *liṅga* worship in India. Secondly, a full-fledged philosophy has developed round the concept of the *liṅga* in the *Śivapurāṇa*(SP), unlike the other *Śaivapurāṇas.* According to the SP, the *liṅga* represents a state of completion, a whole which constitutes two aspects, male and female or the Supreme or His power.

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35. "Riddles and Their Resolutions in the Mythology of Śiva"- Article by Dr. S. Jena, Published in the *Journal of the Oriental Institute, Baroda, Vol. LVIII,* March-June 2009, p. 185.
36. लयनाल्लिङ्गमित्येवं प्रवदन्ति मनीषिणः । *Skanda Maheśvara,* 6.29.30.
37. लयं गच्छन्ति भूतानि संहारे निखिलञ्च निर्गच्छन्ति यतश्चापि लिङ्गोक्तिस्तेन हेतुना । *Ajitāgama* 3.17.18.

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The Supremacy of Lord Śiva can be well imagined in connection with the story where the origin of *liṅga*-worship is described. Once there was a great dispute between Brahmā and Viṣṇu on the issue of superiority between them. When they are locked in serious battle, Lord Śiva appeared there in the form of a huge blazing column of fire. The two gods, proud of their strength and power, mutually decided to discover the top and bottom of that fiery column. Viṣṇu, in the form of a white boar, went to the *Pātāla* in search of the bottom and Brahmā in the form of a swan, went in the upward direction in search of the top. In spite of their strenuous efforts, both the gods failed to find either the bottom or the top of the column and returned disappointedly. Then Śiva appeared there and minimized the column of fire into a *liṅga* which became later, a symbolic form of worship for Śiva.[38] This amounts to the well-established facts of the scriptures that the self-existing unmanifested principle manifests himself and again merges back into the eternal unmanifested form at his own will.[39] This is the endless cosmic circle of creation and dissolution of the universe or the micro-cosmic birth and disintegration of the innumberable living beings. Here, creation or birth signifies manifestation of those elements which were lying dormant in the lap of dissolution or disintegration. The beginning and the end of *liṅga*, therefore, symbolizes the unmanifested nature of the Supreme which is beyond all the senses of perception and the mind. This unmanifested and transcendent nature of the Supreme is unknown even to the sages and gods. The Vedas clearly refer to this transcendental and mystical nature of the Supreme Self.[40] The epithets of the Supreme Śiva, such as *Aparimeya*, *Aparicchedya* and *Anādimadhyanidhāna* occurring in the *Saivāgamas* present a glimpse of this mystical nature of the Supreme.[41]

Another important feature of Śiva as described in the Purāṇas, is that if invoked and pleased with devotions, he used to grant boons very soon to his devotees for which he is termed as Āśutoṣa. The Purāṇas refer to various persons, who had earned boon from him and others who attained heaven on account of their devotion for him. Though the list of such names is very long yet some important names of such persons are Bāṇāsura, Rukmī, Śālva, Vṛkāsura and Bhṛgu etc.[42]

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38. *Śiva Purāṇa*, I. *Vaidyeśvara Samhitā*, Ch. 5. 27-31; II *Rudra-Samhitā* I. *Srṣṭi-Khaṇḍa* ch. 7.47.ff.
39. यथेच्छसि तथा क्रीडा बालः क्रीडनकैरिव । *Hari Vaṁśa* 63.126.
40. पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि । RV. X. 90.3.
41. *Suprabhedāgama*. 5.
42. Mani Vettam : *Puranic Encyclopaedia* , Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi(Reprint) 2006, p.724.

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Śiva is always revered and respected by the gods due to his selfless service for the gods in particular as well as for the world in general. He justifies his name Śiva meaning auspicious, gracious, favourable and benevolent etc. by always doing welfare for his creations. At the time of churning the ocean of milk by the joint effort of *Devas* and *Asuras*, Vāsukī, the snake was used as the churning cord to rotate the mount Mandara. When the churning became intense, the mortal poison *Kālakūṭa* emerged out of Vāsuki's mouth. On the emerging of the deadly poison, the *Asuras* ran off in great fear and the *Devas* got bewildered. Even Viṣṇu covered his face and it appeared that the entire world would be reduced to ashes. At this critical moment, Śiva who is famous for his reckless daring, put all the *Kālakūṭa* into his mouth. Frightened by this, Pārvatī held Śiva's throat by her hands, so that the poison did not enter his stomach. At the same time, Viṣṇu covered with his hands Śiva's mouth, so that the poison was not spitted out. *Kālakūṭa* thus prevented from going down into the stomach or being vomited from Śiva's throat, got itself dissolved in the throat giving it a blue-colour. Thus, Śiva became *Nīlakaṇṭha* and Viṣṇu and Pārvatī who were affected by the flames of poison became *Nīlavarṇa* and Kāli respectively.[43] There are many such stories and legends in the Purāṇas which enable us to bring out the features of the Puranic Śiva.

V. CONCLUSION:

Now, coming to the conclusion, it can be said that Rudra, in the minds of Vedic bards, was the power of uncultivated and unconquered, dangerous, unreliable and unpredictable one and hence much to be feared of him. This sentiment of fear was at the bottom. So He is always implored to be calm and merciful towards his worshippers. The adoration to Rudra in the Vedic literature, was not sincere but utilitarion. If annoyed, he may cause loss to the people. Hence, since he is very hostile harmful and destructivé, he might be invoked repeatedly to be calm with the words '*śivo bhava*', and thus, Rudra became synonymous with Śiva later. The depreciation of Rudra's wrath probably gave rise to the

43. *Ibid.* p. 726.

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euphemistic Śiva, the auspicious one which became the regular name of Rudra's historical successor in the post-Vedic and especially in the Puranic literature.

So in Purāṇas, Śiva is no more a hostile, harmful, destructive and malevolent in nature. Now, he is rather a quite auspicious, gracious, favourable and benevolent god who can very easily be pleased to achieve any desired boon as described in different Purāṇas. For the welfare of the earth, he can put himself in great danger as found in case of his consumption of *Kālakūṭa*, the deadly poison at the time of churning the milk-sea (*kṣīrābdhi*) to save the deities and the world as well from destruction.

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THE PROCESS OF LIGHTNING PHENOMENON AS DESCRIBED IN ANCIENT INDIAN LITERATURE

K.G. Sheshadri*

INTRODUCTION TO MODERN THEORY

Lightning is a natural form of energy that has aroused the curiosity of man since time immemorial. It is associated with a vast mythology and also Modern science that it can still be so mysterious so as to term it as a Divine energy. Ancient people knew very well about the phenomenon of occurrence and formation of lightning that it is reflected in their literature, customs and beliefs and also in practice. Beginning from Vedic texts, Post-Vedic and other cultural beliefs the present paper aims to discover the Phenomenon of lightning and Theories of its origin known to ancient Indians along with an Introductory Modern theory that may help the uninitiated reader to appreciate the ancient marvels.

Lightning is a peak transient electric discharge in which charge accumulated in clouds discharges into a neighbouring cloud or to the ground. The atmosphere is electrically neutral below the Ionosphere which starts 60 km above the earth's surface. Although, Lightning is still a mysterious form of energy as regards to its origin and formation, modern electrical theory describes several theories put forth by scientists like Simpson, Reynolds, Wilson and Mason[1]. In 1752, Benjamin Franklin associated electricity with lightning through his famous Kite experiment. One hypothesis offered to explain electrification and charge separation within thunderstorms involves collisions between rising dust particles and falling rain droplets and ice crystals (hailstones) within the cloud. The larger particles gain a negative charge as they fall, while smaller ones gain a positive charge in upper part of cloud. Once the electric charge is built up, there is a highly branched stepped leader that begins the discharge to the ground. The ground below the clouds is positively charged and the maximum accumulation of charges occurs at a highest point on the ground such as a hill or tall building. A discharge

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Plot. No. 30, "Lakshmy Nivas", Railway Colony, R. M. V. Extension, Lottegollahalli, Bangalore -560094, Email: kg_sheshadri@yahoo.com.

1. Naidu, M. S., V. Kamaraju, *High Voltage Engineering*, Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Co. Ltd, New Delhi, 1998, p. 226-229.

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begins from the ground and propagates upwards until one of them meets the stepped leader, thus forming the return stroke. This is the start of the lightning strike. A typical lightning flash consists of three or four stepped leaders and return streamers as shown in Fig. 1.

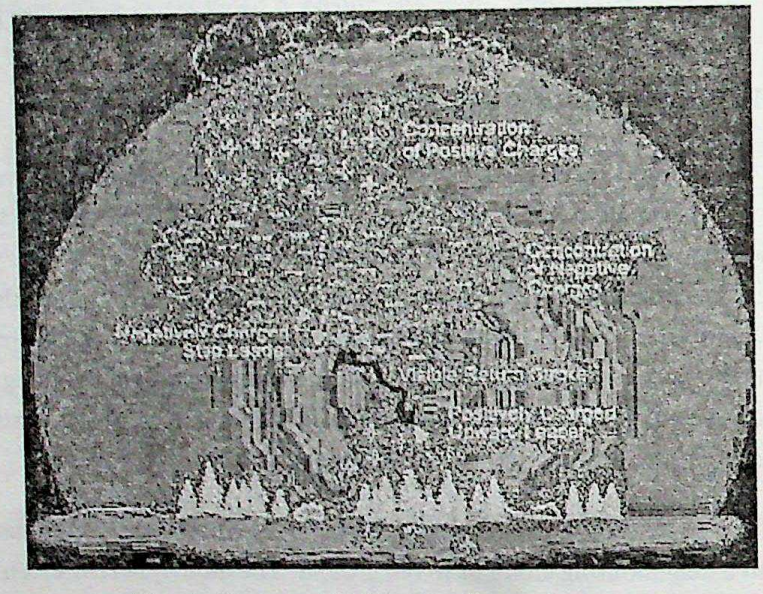

Fig. 1. Process of Lightning Formation

LIGHTNING PHENOMENON IN HISTORY

Pliny, the Greek Elder in his '*Naturalis Historia*' (1st c. A. D.) asserts that the Etruscans had a secret method of drawing lightning from clouds[2]. Seneca refers to the work of Posidonious (1st c. B. C.) who noted six classes of lightning. Aristotle (384 - 322 B. C.) also in his book '*Meteorologica*' discusses about lightning[3]. Many ancient civilizations knew something about divine nature of lightning and incorporated their beliefs in their mythology as well as customs. The Temple of Jerusalem had metal rods on the roof which acted as lightning conductors[4]. Similarly many Oak tree sanctuaries associated with Gods of Thunder and Lightning among the Greeks, Romans and other Baltic tribes were situated on Hill tops[5]. Such areas where

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2. Dunsheath Percy, *A History of Electrical Engineering*, Faber and Faber Publishers, London, 1962, Chapter 1.
3. Singer Stanley, *The Nature of Ball Lightning*, Plenum Press, London, July 1972, Chapter 2.
4. Larsen Egon, *A History of Invention*, JM Dent and Sons Ltd, London, 1961, Chapter 3, p. 46.
5. Chadwick H. Munro, The Oak and the Thunder God, *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 30, (New Series Vol. 3), 1900, p. 22-44.

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thunderstorms were at a maximum were generally associated with places of worship. Minoan art images of mountain temple sites in Crete had lightning rods to minimize these effects of lightning. Similarly, Flagstaffs at Ptolemaic temple of Edfu in South Egypt record that these masts were arranged to cleave the thunderstorms in heights of heavens and for venerating Horus – the Lightning bringer[6].

LIGHTNING PHENOMENON IN VEDIC LITERATURE

Vedic texts refer to the term विद्युत् (*Vidyut*) and has the sense of meaning विषेशेण द्योतते (*viṣeśeṇa dyotate*) 'having a special brilliance'. Vedic literature does not glorify lightning as a deity but associates it as a weapon of the Gods and a bringer of heavenly fire, except for a few passages where it is worshipped. Post Vedic texts associate the meaning of lightning to this word. Regarding the origin of Lightning and its formation, Vedic texts speak about lightning extensively. All sorts of clouds cannot possess electrical charge but only those formed by vapours evaporated by radiation from sun become electrically charged. When water particles (आपः - *āpaḥ*) are set to move violently, they are called pravatā (प्रवता- floating clouds).

Electrical charge is their daughter and is termed as प्रवतोनपात् (*pravatonapāt*-offsprings of water) in *Atharvaveda Saṁhitā*[7] AV (1.13.2).

नमस्ते प्रवतोनपाद्यतस्तपः समूहसि ।
मृडया नस्तनूभ्यो मयेस्तोक्तेभ्यस्कृधि ।।

On similar lines the hymn in *Ṛgveda*[8] (RV 2.35.9) also associates *pravatonapāt* with lightning as in -

अपां नपादाह्यस्थादुपस्थं जिह्वानामूर्ध्वो विद्युतं वसानः ।
तस्य ज्येष्ठं महिमानं वहन्तीर्हिरण्यवर्णाः परि यन्ति यह्वीः ।।

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6. Brennan Herbie, *The Secret History of Ancient Egypt*, New York, 2001.
7. Joshi K. L., *Atharvaveda Saṁhitā* (AV) *with Sanskrit text, English translation according to W. D. Whitney and Sāyaṇācārya Bhāṣyā*, Parimal Publications, New Delhi, 2004, Vols. I-III., p. 25 (of Vol. I).
8. Arya Ravi Prakash, K. L. Joshi, *Ṛgveda Saṁhitā with English translation according to H. H. Wilson and Sāyaṇācārya Bhāṣyā*, Parimal Publications, New Delhi, 2005, Vols. I-IV.

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Vidyut has been glorified to be a weapon of Maruts-the wind Gods as in the use of terms such as 'विद्युद्धस्ता' (*vidyuddhastā*-lightning in their hands) and 'विद्युद्रथ' (*Vidyudratha* – chariot being lightning itself) and also weapon of Indra as found in the passages of *Rgveda* (RV.8.7.25; 1.32.13; 1.38.8; 1.64.9), *Atharvaveda Saṁhitā*[9] (AV 1.13.1; 1.13.4). The ionization of air in higher atmosphere helps formation of clouds by attracting water particles around ions (charged particles) and this is expressed in a hymn to Indra in RV(5.31.8). Scientifically translated as-

त्वमापो यदर्वतुर्वशायारमयः सुदुघाः पार इन्द्र ।
उग्रमवयातमवहो ह कुत्सं सं ह यद्वामुशनारन्त देवाः ।।

'That for protection, thou O Indra dost attract ('अरमयः' -*aramayaḥ*) nourishing water for the cloud (तुर्वशाय – *turvaśāya*, fast going = cloud) and thou bearest fierce penetrating lustre (कुत्सं -*kutsam* energy residing in radiations) which is deviated (अवयातम् -*avayātam*) the luminous appraise (उशनारन्तः -*uśanārantaḥ*) you two (Indra and his lustre)'.

The *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*[10] (TB.1.1.3.12) says that Marutas are formed by intermingling of *āpaḥ* (water particles) and *Agni*. When '*Agni*' is expanded into two forms, its nucleus is shattered and so thunderbolt comes into being.

मरुतोऽद्भिरग्निमतमयन् ।
तस्य तान्तस्य हृदयं आच्छिदन् ।
सा अशनिरभवत् ।।

The same is expressed by the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (SB 7.5.2.49)[11] which says –

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9. Joshi K. L., AV, *Ibid*., Vol. I, p. 25-26.

10. Prof. Kumar Pushpendra, *Kṛṣṇa Yajurvedīya Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa with Sāyanācārya Bhāṣyā*, Nag Publishers, New Delhi, 1998, Vols. I-III, see Vol. III.

11. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa according to Mādhyandina recension with* Bhāṣyā *of* Sāyaṇācārya *and* Harisvāmin, Vols. I-V, Nag Publishers, New Delhi, 1990, Vol. III, p. 26

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अपां त्वा ज्योतिषि सादयामीति ।
विद्युद्वाऽपां ज्योतिर्व्विद्युतिताग्ूं सादयति ।।

and also the *Kapiṣṭhala Saṁhita* says

तस्य मरुतः स्तनयित्नुना हृदयं ।
आच्छिदन स दिव्याश्निरभवत् ।।

The *Bṛhaddevatā* of *Śaunaka*[12] also attributes lightning to be a form of *Agni* as in

अर्चिभिः केश्ययं त्वग्निर् विद्युद्भिश्चैव मध्यमः ।
असौ तु रश्मिभिः केशी तेनैनानाह केशिनः ।।

-*Bṛhaddevatā* (I.94)

That the Maruts (the Wind gods) were associated with lightning similar to Agni can be suggested easily by the hymn from *Yajurveda Saṁhitā*[13] YV (34.12) as

त्वमग्ने प्रथमो अङ्गिरा ऋषिर्देवो देवानामभवः शिवः सखा ।
तव व्रते कवयो विद्यापसोऽजायन्त मरुतो भ्राजदृष्टयः ।।

'O Agni, thou earliest Aṅgiras, the seer, has God thyself become auspicious friends of Gods. After thy holy ordinance, the Maruts O sage, active through wisdom with their glittering spears (lightning flashes) were born.'

The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*[14] (TA 1.8.27) says 'विद्युत्सूर्ये समाहिता' (*Vidyutsūrye samāhitā*) stating that *Vidyut* has its origin in the Sun. The evidence for this occurs in synonyms for lightning as in *Pataṅgā, Bakura* (RV 1.117.21) and *Sūryaputra*. The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka* (TA I.9.34-35) also speaks of 11 forms of Rudra who is personified as lightning namely *Prabhrājamanā,*

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12. Rai Ramkumar, *Bṛhaddevatā* of *Śaunaka*, Kashi Sanskrit Series No.164, Chowkhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, 2003, p. 23.
13. Griffith Ralph T. H., Ed. Surendra Pratap, *Yajurveda Saṁhitā*, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 1990, Chapter XXXIV, p. 492.
14. Shastri A. Mahadeva, K. Rangacharya (eds.), *Kṛṣṇa Yajurvedīya Taittirīya Āraṇyaka with Bhāṣyā of Bhaṭṭa Bhāskara Miśra*, English Introduction by T. N. Dharmadhikari, Vols. I-III (bound), Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, New Delhi, 1985, p. 56.

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Vyavadātā, Vāsukivaidyuta, Rajatā, Paruṣa, Śyāmā, Kapilā, Atilohitā, Ūrdhva, Avapatanta and *Vaidyuta* [15]. The commentary clearly defines the characteristics of each of them.

अथ वायोरेकादशपुरुषस्यैकादशस्त्रीकस्य । प्रभ्राजमाना व्यवदाताः ।। याश्च वासुकिवैद्युताः ।
रजताःपरुषाश्श्यामाः । कपिला अतिलोहिताः । ऊर्ध्वा अवपतन्ताश्च । वैद्युत इत्येकादश ।
.....नैनं वैद्युतो हिनस्ति । य एवं वेद । स होवाच व्यासः पाराशर्यः ।

Vedic texts also give another theory on the origin of lightning. Yāska in his '*Nirukta*' (5.13) mentions that the term '*Apsara*' means 'one who moves on water' and is associated with lightning[16]. In this context, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (7.5.2.49) states that the light of waters is lightning (विद्युद्वा अपां ज्योतिः - *vidyudvā apāṁ jyotiḥ*). The *Yajurveda Saṁhitā*[17] YV (15.19) associates *Urvaśī* and *Pūrvacitti* with thunder and lightning. Further evidence that the *Apsaras* are associated with lightning is found in the RV (10.95.10) and *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*[18] (3.4.7.2)

सुभूतिर्भद्रकृत्सुवर्वान्पर्जन्यो गन्धर्वस्तस्य विद्युतोऽप्सरसो रुचा ।

LIGHTNING PHENOMENON IN POST VEDIC LITERATURE

The phenomenon of lightning was well understood by people of ancient India as evident from several references to it. Many *Dharmasūtras* prescribe discontinuing of study (of *Veda*) during lightning strikes. Some other texts prescribe purificatory rituals when one is struck by lightning. These include the *Aśanihata prāyaścittam*[19], *Vidyutpātaśāntiḥ*[20] and the *Vidyudagninā Dagdhagṛhaśāntiḥ* section of *Śaunakakārikā* [21]. They also deal on rituals when a lightning

15. *Ibid.*, p. 67-69.
16. Shastri Pt. Seetaram, Yāska *'s 'Nirukta' with Nighaṇṭu*, Parimal Publications, New Delhi, 2002.
17. Griffith Ralph T. H., YV, *Ibid.*, p. 232.
18. Kashyap R. L., *Kṛṣṇa Yajurvedīya Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, Vols. I-III, Sri. Aurobindo Kapali Shastry Institute of Vedic Culture, Bangalore, 2003.
19. Rangacharya, M., Rao Bahadur, *Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts*, Vol. VII, Class 4, Dharmashastra, Madras Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library, 1909, p. 2601.
20. Rangacharya, M., Rao Bahadur, *Op. cit.*, Vol. VI-Dharmashastra, p. 2571.
21. Mohanty Dr. Sulok Sundar, *Śaunakakārikā*, Medha Indological Publications, Jagatsinghpur, Orissa, 1999, p. 243.

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strikes a tree, men, houses and temples. Most of them may have a scientific background which has not yet been researched by Modern Science. The *Bṛhatsaṁhitā*[22] of Varāhamihira (6th c. A.D.), RV (10.68.4) and *Nāradasaṁhitā*[23] (XLIII.1) describe different types of lightnings tracing their origins to Meteors.

स्वर्गाच्युतानां रूपाणि यान्युल्कास्तानि वै भुवि ।
धिष्ण्योल्काविद्युदशनितारा: पञ्चविधाः स्मृताः ।।
-*Nāradasaṁhitā* (XLIII.1))

A similar theory stating that Lightning originates in Meteors is found in the *Vaimānika Śāstra*[24] of Maharṣi Bhāradvāja –a text that throws interesting light on various types of lightnings encountered over earth and elsewhere in the cosmos that cause harm to movement of aeroplanes. It says–

रोचिषी दाहका सिंही पतङ्गा कालनेमिका ।
लता वृन्दा रटा चण्डी महोर्मी पार्वणी मृडा ।।
उल्कानेत्रस्थिता ह्येते विद्युतो द्वादश क्रमात् ।।

'The 12 lightnings which form the eyes of meteors are namely *Rociṣī, Dāhakā, Siṁhī, Pataṅgā, Kālanemikā, Latā, Vṛndā, Raṭā, Caṇḍī, Mahormī, Pārvaṇī and Mṛḍā.*'

A similar allusion and support to the theory of *Apsaras* being associated with lightning phenomenon is found in Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *'Kādambarī'* which refers to fourteen genealogical orders of them of which one class descended from Water and lightning[25].

यथा विबुधसद्मनि अप्सरसो नाम कन्यकाः सन्तीति ।
तासां चतुर्दश कुलानि ।
.....अन्यत् सौदामिनीभ्यः प्रवृत्तम् ।

22. Bhatt, M. Ramakrishna, *Varāhamihira's Bṛhatsaṁhitā*, Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, New Delhi, 1981, Vol. I-II, Chp. XXXIII.5.
23. Mishra Acharya Ramajanma, *Nārada Saṁhitā with Vimalā Hindi commentary*, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series No. 40, Kashi, 2001, Chp. XLIII.1.
24. Josyer G. R., Maharṣi Bhāradvāja's *Vaimānika Śāstram with Bodhānanda Bhāṣya*, Mysore, 1973, p. 89.
25. Shastri KrishnaMohana, Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *'Kādambarī' with Candrakalā and Vidyotinī commentary*, Kashi Sankrit Series No. 151, Chowkhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi,1961, p. 411.

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It states that places on mountain peaks where thunderstorms were frequent, it was believed to be haunted by visiting *Apsaras*, *Gandharvas* and therefore *Triśūlas* (three pronged Iron tridents) were set up in those high peaks (acting as lightning conductors) from ancient days.

इतश्च नातिदूरे तस्यास्माद्भास्तवर्षादुत्तरेणान्तरे किम्पुरुषनाम्नि वर्षे वर्षपर्वतो हेमकूटो नाम निवासः ।
तत्र च तद्भुजयुगलं परिपालितान्यनेकानि गन्धर्वशतसहस्राणि प्रतिवसन्ति ।।

The AV (2.2.6) terms *Apsaras* as अभ्रियेविद्युत् (*abhriyevidyut/ abhriyedidyut*)[26].

Ideas similar to Benjamin Franklin's Kite experiment are expressed in the imaginary fancies of poetical literature but are scientifically meaningful. During a thunderstorm, Franklin sent up a kite with iron tip. When the wet end of kite string was rubbed with a large iron key, sparks sprang from it. In *Raghuvaṁśa* (XIII.21), Kālidāsa expresses a similar similie of touching a cloud[27] –

करेण वातयनलम्बितेन स्पृष्टस्त्वया चण्डि कुतूहलिन्या ।
आमुञ्चतीवाभरणं द्वितीयमुद्भिन्नविद्युद्वलयैः घनस्ते ।।

'O Fury, the cloud touched by you (Sītā) curious as you are with your hand, hanging out of the window of the aerial car appears to be presenting to you, with a bright display of lightning, a second Gold bangle as it were'.

The phenomenon in which the electric charges accumulate at highest objects like tall buildings and exposed hill tops during thunderstorms had been well understood by the ancient people. They have been reflected by views in Bāṇabhaṭṭa's *'Kādambarī'* and also several tribal beliefs also. The *'Cheitharol Kumbaba'*, a Manipuri *Meithei* text records that the hill rising to east of the valley called '*Nong Maiching*' was frequented by thunderstorms. It was

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26. Joshi K. L., AV, *Ibid.*, p. 67.

27. Kale M. R., *Raghuvaṁśa of Kālidāsa -Sanskrit text with English translation and notes*, New Delhi, 2002. Also see Sharma Parameshwar Prasad, *Kalidasa – His Scientific interpretation of certain physical phenomena, K. B. Pathak Commemoration Volume*, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1934, p. 479-488.

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a tradition to erect an iron umbrella on top of the hill as it was a sure method of getting rain.[28]

Similarly, there exists legends that Lord Rudra released the thunderbolt which frightened Sage Vasiṣtha and his disciples. At their request, he agreed to take it back and the place where He emerged to do so is a mountain at the confluence of Parvatī and Beas rivers in Himachal Pradesh. The temple on the hill called *Bijleshwar Mahadev* temple is struck by lightning every twelve years that reduces the Lingam idol to pebbles which is then reformed again by the villagers[29]. The Oudh Gazeteer also speaks of temples for Goddess *Bijleshwari Devi* (Goddess of lightning) built on a hill top by the Maharaja of Balarampur[30]. Similar temples to Gods of Lightning exist in Himachal Pradesh such as Temple of Shirigul, the Bijat temples at Deona, Bandal, Gundal and Dagalga[31].

In Orissa also there exists beliefs that obscene erotic postures erected on temple tops act as protectors of lightning as Indra does not harm a couple in supreme enjoyment[32]. This can also be attributed to relation of *Apsaras* with lightning. Traditional technologies used in conservation of temple *Gopuras* or *Vimānas* from lightning strikes include using copper plates for the *Stūpas* and *Kalaśas* at the top and are filled with *kampu/varahu* (millet and rice varieties) grains to make it strong[33].

In fact, the *Āgamas* do prescribe purificatory rituals for any strike on the *Gopuras* of temples strongly indicating that they had knowledge of lightning striking over tall objects.

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28. Singh M. Jitendra, *Famines in valley of Manipur as recorded in Cheitharol Kumbaba*, Proceedings of North East India History Association, Session 7, Pasighat, 1986, p. 48-52.
29. Sharma Gautam 'Vyathit', Translated by Pande Mrinal, *Folklore of Himachal Pradesh*, National book Trust, Delhi, 1984.
30. Crooke W., *Popular Religion and Folklore of North India*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers (reprint), New Delhi, Chapter 4, p. 175-229 referring to Oudh Gazetteer, Vol. I, p. 210.
31. Rose H. A., *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab and North West Frontier Provinces*, AES Publishers, Delhi, p. 299-300.
32. Roy S. N., *Some common superstitions of rural people*, Journal of Anthropological Society of Bombay, Vol. XIV, No. 6, 1930, p. 732-742.
33. Kulathuran G., Khan Anisa B., *Traditional technologies used in conservation of temple objects*, Journal of Institute of Asian Studies, Vol. 19, No. 2, March 2002, p. 97-106.

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The *Padmodbhava Saṁhitā* states thus[34] -

अशनिपतनं जानं देवतामन्दिरे यथा ।
मन्दिरे देवभूमौ च मण्डपे गोपूरेऽथवा ।।
ग्रामद्वारेषु द्वारेषु आलयस्यं विशेषतः ।
अशनिपतने कुर्यात् प्रायश्चित्तं वदाम्यहम् ।।

-*Padmodbhava Saṁhitā*

Similar rituals are also prescribed in other texts such as *Pañcarātra Saṁhitās* such as *Pauṣkara Saṁhitā* (*Aśanipātaprāyaścitta Paṭala*) and *Vaikhānasa Śāstras* like '*Vimānārcana-kalpa*' of *Maharṣi Marīci* (*Paṭala* 68)[35].

CONCLUSIONS

From the above descriptions of the phenomenon of lightning and its origin, it is clear that ancient Indians had keenly observed and recorded the characteristics of lightnings so as to hand them down to future generations. The ancient texts associate the Sun, Agni, Rudra, Maruts, Indra and Apsaras to the phenomenon of Lightning. Even Modern Scientific observations and theories seem to coincide with the aspects of lightning striking the highest objects, origins of lightning traced to the Sun as well as to meteors. Recent research on Cosmic ray origins of lightning in the West has also strengthened these ancient truths revealed by our sages. Future scope of research into these concepts may be concentrated especially on lightning sciences as part of present day science so as to understand about this divine energy.

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34. Satyanarayanacharu Archak, *Pañcarātra Padmodbhava Saṁhitā*, Old Shri Raghunath Mandir, Varaha Ghat, Pushkar, Ajmer, 2000, Chapter 32, p. 213.
I would like to thank the Secretary, Mythic Society, Bangalore for providing the necessary references.

35. Bhattacharya Raghunatha Chakravarti, Sethu Madhvacharya, *Vimānārcanakalpa' of Maharṣi Marīci*, Venkateshwara Press, Madras, 1926.

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SOME ASPECTS OF THE ICONOGRAPHY OF VIṢṆU**

- G. B. Deglurkar *

Iconography : Introductory:

A scientific study of iconography in India is more than a century old and has reached a high level of maturity through the pioneering efforts of renowned scholars both Indian and Foreigner of high repute.

Against this backdrop, an attempt is being done today to present the deity Viṣṇu in three of its aspects namely Śrīviṭṭhala, Narasiṁha and Vaikuṇṭha. In the process, it will be elucidated as to how the Vaikuṇṭha aspect embodies *Pañcarātra* philosophy and leads the devotee to the path of salvation. Hence, this aspect has to be considered as an ultimate in Viṣṇu's iconography.

The concept of the deity i.e. Viṣṇu was very clear right from the Rigvedic period. His description though short as compared to that of other Rigvedic gods is adequate to know his importance. It is of course verbal and of *Nirguṇa-Nirākāra* type. From Puranic period, when he is considered as a part of a Hindu triad consisting of Brahmā and Śiva as other two partners, his importance increased. He became protector of the universe. Gradually, he appeared as *Saguṇa –Sākāra* deity. Then, he appeared in his various forms depending on the roles, he played.

There is no need, I presume, to deal with Viṣṇu's different aspects, his twenty four forms (*caturviṁśatimūrti*) namely Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, Govinda etc. and the clue to recognize them, his ten or more incarnations, his miscellaneous images like Śeṣaśāyī, Yogīśvara, his syncretic forms like Hari-Hara, Sūrya -Nārāyaṇa, Brahmeśānajanārdanārka etc. It is true that even the educated people by now forgot the significance of this syncretism. The leaders of the society in those days should be admired for this device, they have adopted. Through such icons, they tried to convince the masses that gods either *Śaiva* or *Vaiṣṇava* are ultimately one and the same, we should not make any distinction between them.

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A study of iconography reveals reasons of creating different images which enable us to understand the psychology of a particular section of society or of the period of the formation of these images. As is well known icons stand for various purposes or religious practices, such as: *Yoga, Bhoga, Vīra* and *Abhicārika*. Apart from the spiritual and metaphysical dimensions of iconography, which are to be focused in the talk today. I feel it necessary to deal with the icons belonging to the first category namely, the *Yoga*, which has provided probably an idea of formation of an icon when a devotee felt a need to personify the Upanishadic philosophy.

Viṭṭhala as *Yogamūrti*:

Yoga of the four categories referred to above images of the first category are meant for enabling a devotee to meditate upon. Such images of Viṣṇu as well as of Śiva are available from the Mathura museum, the Kailāśa at Ellora, the Khajuraho temples and the Śrīviṭṭhala temple of Pandharpur, to name a few. Śrīviṭṭhala of Pandharpur being a very important and revered deity, around whom revolves the religious main stream of Maharashtra, needs a detailed treatment to delineate its iconography. So far the exact nature of this deity remained enigmatic. The image in question installed in a sanctum stands erect, with rigid and straight legs, the feet together in the *samacaraṇa* pose, the hands akimbo, holding a conch in the left and a lotus in the right hand, Kālidāsa would have described this pose with no suggestion of movement either of hands or feet as संचारिणी दीपशिखेव रात्रौ (steady as an un-flickering lamp). He holds conch, a symbol of knowledge and lotus, a symbol of purity, both these qualities are essential for a *Yogī*. And hence the image of Śrīviṭṭhala can be identified as a *yogasthānaka* image. None of the saints have ever sought worldly pleasures of him. The prayers to him, in fact, have been of a different sort seeking liberation from the worldly bonds : whether this corporal body exists or not, my devotion to Viṭṭhala remains steadfast. I vow never to leave his feet; देह राहो अथवा जावो.

All the Yogic aspects can be observed in the image of Viṭṭhala very clearly. No wonder then that Jñānadeva describes 'I like very much Śrīviṭṭhala as *yogirāja*'. These details of the *Yogasthānakamūrti* of Śrīviṭṭhala will help solve various controversies regarding his iconography and more than that in understanding the religious life in Maharashtra in its proper perspective.

Origin and Development of Narasiṁha

There is hardly any need to stress the intimate connection of Indian iconography with religion and religious life of the people through the centuries. An intensive and analytical study of iconography can lay bare the hidden religious strings of iconographic manifestation

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and thereby help us reconstruct the process of religious change and of social formations that initiated these changes. Occasional help was therefore often sought from religious myths in the identification and classification of images for which no precedent existed. Now a days, scholars in the field are engaged in doing systematic efforts at utilizing the great store-house of Indian mythology in the interpretation of the icons. Such an interpretation emphasizing the close inter-relationship between the myths and the icons holds great potential for deeper understanding of the religious life as well as social transformation and process of social integration.

The iconographic record when became profuse and varied in due course of time was particularly conducive for a spontaneous upsurge of new iconic forms, due in large measure to the integration of folk-cults and folk-gods into the mainstream of established religions. The process of integration was not always smooth as the mythological annals indicate but once it had been initiated the myths rationalized it and the icons carried it to graphic perfection. The therianthropic incarnations of Viṣṇu as also of Kārttikeya and Gaṇeśa acquiring the status of Śiva's sons were intrinsically drawn from popular folk beliefs. Against this backdrop let me proceed to trace the origin of Narasiṁha as described in literature. An attempt is made here to bring together from literature and iconographic sources, material sufficient to present Narasiṁha in all his aspects and stages through which he is evolved to the present position as an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

Originally Narasiṁha was an *Yakṣa*. And it is well known that worship of *Yakṣas* as *Devas* was very ancient, probably of Pre-Vedic period. They possessed *Deva*'s supernormal power. They had played important roles in religious history and in iconographic evolution.

Vīra and Yakṣa:

In the village life worship to *Yakṣa* is continued even to this day, mainly because they are considered as *Vīra*-s. In the folk religion, *Vīra* or *Yakṣa* had contributed a lot. *Vīras* are generally ferocious, so Narasiṁha being himself one amongst them. It can be made clear that *Vīra* and *Yakṣa* are synonymous. No less than authority like V.S. Agrawala tells us that in all the lists available of 52 *Viras* name of Narasiṁha invariably appears[1]. And as *Vīra*, basically Narasiṁha also was ferocious. In the *Ṛṇavimocanastotra*, he is alluded to as '*Śrīnarasiṁhaṁ Mahāvīraṁ namāmi ṛṇamuktaye.* (I pray to Narasiṁha who absolves me of my debt)(P. 423) and in *Narasiṁhamantrarāja*, he is described as *Ugravīram mahāviṣṇuṁ jvalantaṁ sarvatomukhaṁ / Narasiṁhaṁ bhīṣaṇaṁ bhadram mṛtyumṛtyuṁ namāmyaham //* (P. 381)

1 *Prachin Bharatiya Lokadharma*, appendix, pp 145-47

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Navarasanārāyaṇa, a *Mahānubhāva* poet from Marathwada frequently refers to him as *Vīra*, while referring to 52 *Vīras* and another poet of the same cult Santoshamuni Krishnadasa narrates a story in his work '*Rukmiṇīsvayaṁvara*' as to how Rukmī brother of Rukmiṇī finally invited *Vīras* to help to defeat Kṛṣṇa's army to get back Rukmiṇī who was eloping with Kṛṣṇa and how in a counteraction Kṛṣṇa pressed *Narasiṁhāstra* (Narasiṁha as a powerful *Vīra*) in action to defeat Rukmī. And again, *Matsyapurāṇa* (179.63), while narrating an episode related to *Andhakāsuravadha* by Śiva, tells us how Narasiṁha was invited to control the *Saptamātṛkās* who later on became troublesome.

Initially, Narasiṁha was dreadful as stated above. It was only after his visits to holy places to get rid of his sin of killing Hiraṇyakaśipu, he became *Saumya* i.e. peaceful. This is a good example to show as to how *lokadharma* has converted ferocious *Vīra* into a peaceful one. Hence, he is called *Samarāja* indicating a peaceful form of Narasiṁha. Samartha Ramdasaswami again from Marathwada, prays him as *Jaya Jaya Samarāja Samarāja / saṅkaṭi pāvasi deva bhakta kājā* // i.e. Glory be to *Samarāja*. Glory be to *Samarāja*, who helps devotees in calamity. Madhvamunīśvara, another native from Marathwada addresses him 'Oh *Samarāja*, ye my master.'

Lion-faced *Yakṣa*:

There is hardly any need to say that many *Yakṣa*-s were with faces of various animals. We know some of them by names such as Gaṇeśa, Hanumān, etc. Narasiṁha was one of them. According to *Matsyapurāṇa* (183.63-66), lion –faced *Yakṣa* was included among the *Yakṣas* of Kashi who were shown as *Śivagaṇas*. It may not be irrelevant to say that a *Jaina* work *Antagadadasavo* refers to *Siṁhamukhī Yakṣas*.

When it is observed by religious authorities that the lion-faced Yakṣa was popular among the masses and had become a part of their faith, the authorities very tactfully made his entry possible into *Vaiṣṇava* pantheon, which resulted into a new incarnation–story. Utilizing his inherent ferocity (*Yakṣa*'s intrinsic old quality), he was made to kill a dreadful Hiraṇyakaśipu to protect his devotee Prahlāda. It means his old trait or a killing instinct befitting an *Ugra* - *Yakṣa* has been diplomatically used in an expedient way. Herein, a wonderful phenomenon is witnessed which can be described in the words of Saint Jñāneśvara (*Kṣudra daivatāñce kṣudratva phiṭo / Tayā udātta bhāva bheṭo* // i.e. Let the degraded creatures shed their obnoxious instincts and earn commendable qualities. These were promoted to the godhood in such a way that their assimilation or fusion with the gods of established religion became very smooth. In fact, this is the characteristic of Indian culture which is all-inclusive.

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Another step towards the process of integration is visible in the images of Lakṣmī-Narasiṁha. No incarnation of Viṣṇu has Lakṣmī as its spouse except that of Narasiṁha(very rarely Varāha). It clearly means that Narasiṁha is promoted as Viṣṇu himself and not merely his incarnation. With this, absorption is totally complete.

After attaining this status of Viṣṇu naturally, he is honoured as a *Kuladaivata* (Family deity) in number of families in Maharashtra and possibly in other states particularly of the South. Otherwise, as an incarnation, he could have been offered a status at the most of *Iṣṭadevatā*. The deities assuming the position of *Kuladaivata* are generally the *Mūladevatā*-s and it is seen that Narasiṁha is honoured with that position.

Stages in the formation of Narasiṁha image:

Marathwada and Vidarbha present all forms of Narasiṁha with exceptions of *Girija* and *Tāṇḍava* (*Nṛtya*) Narasiṁha. They are of Kevala, Sthauṇa, Vidaraṇa, Yoga, Yānaka and Lakṣmī-Narasiṁha. In fact, this is a journey of lion-faced *Yakṣa* to Narasiṁha, nay Viṣṇu himself.

As the first step suggesting merger of a clan or tribe worshipping lion as totem or tutelary deity into the folds of the larger group of society and thus elevating the status of that tribe is seen through a plaque reported from Kondumotu in Andhra Pradesh, It hardly needs any description. We do not find any icon where in Narasiṁha in lions' form and killing the demon as described in the *Harivaṁsa* (30.13), '*Yena saihaṁ vapuḥ kṛtvā dvidhā kṛtvā ca tatpunaḥ/ pūrvadaityo mahāvīryo Hiraṇyakaśipurhataḥ*'[2] .

This can be followed with the icons of Kevala Narasiṁha, According to scholars, though its appearance is shown at Deogad in M.P., it seems that the one at Ramtek near Nagpur is earlier than it. This is quite a large size-image (In fact there are two such icons). He is shown seated in *Ardhaparyaṅkāsana* holding a *cakra* in his right hand, which is placed on a raised right knee. The *Cakra* is placed on the ground. The Lord's left hand rests on the flexed left leg. Narasiṁha here is with lion's head which is natural and with no crown on his head. It is *Saumya* type of image. Similar images are reported from Gogaon distt. Gadchiroli, Bhatala distt. Chandrapur, Nandapur and Parsivani in Nagpur distt. and Gaurala near Bhandak. These images belong to the 4th - 5th cent. A.D. Seated Kevala images are also known from Pusad, Raher, Ramling-mudgad, Umarga, Pangaon, etc.

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2 Joshi N.P. 1977 p.67; line drawing 13.2 photo 7

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Sthauṇa Images:

The *Sthauṇa* images are seen at Ellora caves and a solitary one is reported from Bhatala which is according to me is wrongly identified as *Vidaraṇa* . E.B. HAVEll remarks about the *sthauṇa* image from cave no.15: The sculptor has chosen the moment when the terrific apparition of the man-lion rushes forth (out of a pillar) to seize Hiraṇya who, taken unawares and with the mocking taunt still on his lips makes a desperate effort to defend himself etc. He has eight hands with which he controls the fighting spirit of the demon. It should be made clear at this point that with most of the Viṣṇu images upto 5th -6th cent. A.D., Hiraṇya is not noticeable . One thing, we must not forget that the Yakṣa-figures particularly in the south were made in wood and we all know that Narasiṁha comes out of a wooden pillar. It clearly indicates the journey of Lion-faced *Yakṣa* to that of an incarnation of Viṣṇu.

Vidaraṇa Images:

The *Vidaraṇa* form of the deity is very popular and naturally his images are seen in abundance. They are with 4, 6, 8, 12 and even 14 hands. The last type is known from Paithan distt. Aurangabad. It is superb. It is a loose sculpture of 11th -12th cent. He is seated in *vāmalalitāsana* . The lower right hand holds the hand of Hiraṇya . Other hand is entailing belly of the demon. Remaining five hands from the lower right hand hold serially *śaṅkha, khaḍga, gadā, pāśa,* and *kheṭaka*. The upper left hand holds *khaḍga, aṅkuśa, padma, bāṇas, cakra* serially downwards. The lower left hand is shown entailing the demon's belly, where as the lowest left hand is shown holding leg of Hiraṇya. This one form is supportive of my thesis. This is in a way another step of a slow process of transformation of Lion-faced Yakṣa into a *Vaiṣṇava* deity. His killer instinct as a *Yakṣa* is retained, but was used for a pious purpose of *Vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām*, for which Viṣṇu is known. This is remarkable move on the part of the religious authorities in that period. This is to gauge whether his acceptance in *Vaiṣṇava* fold was digested by the devotees .

Yoga Narasiṁha:

Icon of this type of Narasiṁha is found at Shelgaon in Deglur District. He is four-armed the mace and disc being in the upper hands, while two lower hands are placed on his lap. *Yogapaṭṭa* is seen round his legs and the back.

Lakṣmī –Narasiṁha:

Though not many, yet this type of images are found in sizable number. It is to be marked, as stated above that no other incarnation of Viṣṇu is honoured this way. Other incarnations are with their respective spouse like Rāma-Sītā, Balarāma-Revatī, Kṛṣṇa-Rukmiṇī

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etc. To me, this step in Viṣṇu iconography suggests the final transformation. Now onwards Narasiṁha does not remain as an incarnation of Viṣṇu but Viṣṇu himself. In this way, he gradually assumes the place of Viṣṇu.

This is the story indicating the process of development of folk-god to that of *Mūladeva.*

While concluding, it can be brought out that this is a specialty of *Bhāratīya-saṁskṛti* – Indian Culture, which is all inclusive and which endeavours forever for social integration through various devices. Iconography was such a device. It had made social transformation and integration, visual.

There are various reasons and basis for the preparation of images and the consequential changes in the religious or cultic approaches of society. Myths of course have played major role in providing various themes and situations for the artists-sculptor for creation of various icons. But the most important and the highest motivation of all these is also provided by the thinker-philosophers of ancient India. Let us turn our attention now towards that:

***Bimba-Brahma* Concept:**

The realization of the indivisible unity of the *Brahman* and the *Ātman* was for the Upaniṣads the ultimate knowledge, the release (*mokṣa*), the salvation. The elaboration of the main thread of the Upanishadic thought, along various paths, finally in due course crystallized into the various schools of metaphysical thoughts. The search for the perfect physical form of the divinity on one hand and for the metaphysical formless *Brahman* on the other, continued their separate but parallel courses for a long time, the *Saguṇa* and the *Nirguṇa* unable to find a meeting ground. The emergence of the *bhakti* cult/school changed the entire religious scenario. For the ardent devotee the *Saguṇa* icon was merely an outer casement, a symbol of the formless *Nirguṇa* that permeated the entire universe, the ultimate life being the realization of the intuitive identity of the individual and the universal soul, the *Ātman* and the *Brahman* or the *Jīvātman* and the *Paramātman* (*Īśvara*). The *Bhagavadgītā* (12.1-6) was the final culmination of the process of synchronizing the *Saguṇa* and the *Nirguṇopāsanā*, advocating in very unequivocal terms the importance of *Saguṇa* worship for the common man. To the Arjuna's query as to whom he considers great among the *bhaktas* whether the *Saguṇopāsaka* or the *Nirguṇopāsaka*, Lord Kṛṣṇa replies, 'He considers those as the best *yogī*-s, who worship Him in a *saguṇa* form or as the imaged *Īśvara*'.

The pre-eminence of the *Saguṇa* worship led to a spread of new gods and goddesses, brought to life through sculpted stone images. The artist-sculptors let their imagination run-riot to create a crowded pantheon of vivid forms and rich symbolism. It was a phase of hectic experimentation, to create the perfect form, perfect in its appeal, majesty and grandeur. The

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identity of *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa* propagated by the *Bhagavadgītā* put the onus of responsibility on the *Saguṇopāsaka* to show the path to the formless *Brahman*, through the worship of the imaged *Īśvara*. Thus attempts were made to create form representative of the *avyakta Brahman* and to create a suitable structure representing the cosmos to house it. The image and the temple thus came together symbolizing the universe and its motivating supreme power. It must, however, have taken centuries of experimentation to evoke the most suitable combination, to conceptualize and formulate a design. The ultimate perfected formula was perhaps the work of the philosophers and thinkers amongst the sculptors, striving to unite with the formless principle through their artistic vision. I have chosen to call the finest product of their iconic version *Bimba-Brahma*. The *Bimba* –the image symbolizing *Brahman* was the ultimate in the art of icon making in ancient India. The sculptor could not aim to go beyond it in a way, it is impossible even to think of it for there is little scope left for that.

I propose to dwell at some length on this concept—*Bimba-Brahma*, elucidating appropriate iconographic evidences during the course of this lecture. Iconography is as often, at one and the same time, as already stated above, the artistic expression of religious fervour, as well as a search for the metaphysical ultimate. The search began with the *Nāsadīya* in the *Ṛgveda*. There was not non-existent nor existent, there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it. What covered in, and where? And what gave it shelter? Was water there, unfathomed depth of water? etc. It should be made clear here that the search was not of an ultimate in iconography but of the metaphysical ultimate which is ultimately given suitable form.

This beautiful poetic yarning never came to an end; the search continued, assuming diverse metaphysical expressions. The elusive ultimate is within the reach of only an intuitive experience. The experience could neither be shared nor communicated. It was bliss and nothing but bliss, beyond words, beyond form. As the devotional theism of the *Bhakti* school gained momentum a new pathway was thrown open for the realization of the formless ultimate. The *Nirguṇa* became *saguṇa*, the *nirākāra* assumed vibrant *ākāra*, the metaphysical became transformed into the physical. The iconic expression of the metaphysical ultimate not only took diverse forms but forms which were pregnant with beautiful suggestively. These fantasies in the sculptural stone came to personify in concrete form the dogmas and tenets of the various schools of philosophy, struggling to give expression to the ultimate that pervades the universe. What the words could express through endless discourses appeared in visual stone in compact suggestion.

Viṣṇu as *Vaikuṇṭha*:

The nature of Viṣṇu as *Vaikuṇṭha* has been discussed in the Vedic, Puranic, Agamic

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and Darshanic traditions. These sources deal with his name, features, image and abode. His images and temples are known particularly from the north. His etymology which is discussed by the learned and the stories which appear in the scriptures would be helpful in understanding *Vaikuṇṭha* rather more intimately. The *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (8.5.4-5) says, 'It is Viṣṇu himself, who tells that all creatures become virtuous, because of his pure success. i.e. he obstructs sin, so, he is known as *Vaikuṇṭha*. Etymologically, proved meaning of *Vaikuṇṭha* is *vigatā kuṇṭhā yasya saḥ vikuṇṭho vikuṇṭha eva Vaikuṇṭhah* i.e. who knows no obstructions is *Vaikuṇṭha Bhagavān*.

According to Ādi Śaṅkara, the one who controls the five natural elements, who were moving at the beginning of the universe, uncontrolled helter-skelter is *Vaikuṇṭha. Vividhā kuṇṭhā gateḥ pratihatīḥ Vikuṇṭhā Vikuṇṭhāyāḥ karteti Vaikuṇṭhaḥ". Jagadārambhe viśliṣṭāni bhūtāni parasparaṁ saṁśleṣayan teṣāṁ gatiṁ pratibandhātīti Vaikuṇṭhaḥ. Viṣṇusahasranāma* .57. The *Bhagavān* himself says, 'I have dissolved water in the earth, sky in the air, air in the lustre (*tejas*) and hence I am known as *Vaikuṇṭha* (*Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva).*"

mayā saṁśleṣitā bhūmiradbhiryoma ca vāyunā/
vāyuśca tejasā sārdhaṁ vaikuṇṭhatvaṁ tato mama/ (12.330-15)

According to *Jayākhyasamhitā* (P. 46) of *Pañcarātra Kāśmīrāgama Vaikuṇṭha* has supreme status. And *Pañcarātra –Rakṣā* informs that there is no commingling (intermixture) in the *Vaiṣṇavāgama. Vaikuṇṭha* is only one deity even though it is multi-cephalous. The aim of *Pañcarātra* philosophy is to enable devotee to achieve salvation and this *Vyūha* form is one of the five forms in which *Īśvara* appears. In this form *Paramātman* himself appears in the forms of Vāsudava, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. He symbolizes six qualities (*Ṣaḍguṇa*-s)two each, namely, knowledge and power, lordship and yirility , strength and lustre. Knowing this those who worship, *Paramātman* in the guise of Vāsudeva became one with the Vāsudeva. In a way, entire universe is created by Vāsudeva and they all are to be dissolved in Vāsudeva. The philosophers in ancient period have thought of this nature/ status of Vāsudeva , the *Vaikuṇṭha* being his visual form.

Viṣṇu as *Vaikuṇṭha* appears in the Kuṣāna art at Mathura, in the 1st-2nd century A.D. *Vaikuṇṭha* images became very popular in the Himalayan region, Kashmir and Khajuraho during the early medieval period. A solitary image is met with in Maharashtra also, in the *Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa* temple at Methi in Dhule District. The icons are generally four-headed and four-armed, but the one from the Mārtaṇḍa temple in Kashmir has eight arms. Of the four heads. the central and the two side ones are frontally visible, while the fourth occurs at the back. While the central generally a human head, the two side ones represent a stylized

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lion and boar, the fourth at the back being often a demonical one or that of horse. The *Viṣṇudharmottarapurāṇa* speaks of the great God Viṣṇu rolled into one, the four faces symbolizing *Bala* (strength), *Jñāna* (Knowledge), *Aiśvarya* (lordship) and *Śakti* (power).

Their anthropomorphic figures, particularly with the animal heads and human torsos are not uncommon in Kuṣāṇa art, but they are generally two armed, semi-divine being such as *Yakṣas*. The *Vaikuṇṭha*, however, is a multi-armed and multi-faced divine figure with distinct *Vaiṣṇava* attributes. The assumption of such their anthropomorphic form by Viṣṇu in his various incarnations is a developed theoretical phenomenon of the *Vaiṣṇava* cult. Viṣṇu appears as Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsiṁha and Hayagrīva in his various *avatāra* descents. Making the early appearance in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *avatāra* theory went through a process of gradual evolution and expansion in the Purāṇas, sucking in many a smaller cult figures into the *Vaiṣṇava* orbit between the 1st to the 5/6th centuries A.D. The *Vaikuṇṭha* is a product of the same phase, a composite amalgam, of some of the very same figures which appeared either contemporaneously or slightly later as separate incarnated divinities. In its final evolved form, however, of the 4th century A.D. onwards, the *Vaikuṇṭha* came to symbolize the *Bhāgavata-Pañcarātra* cult centreed around the Vṛṣṇi-heroes. The intensely devotional cult that grew around the Sātvata-vṛṣṇi hero Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa was at the root of the *Bhakti* movement of the early centuries A.D. It came to be designated as *Vaiṣṇava* at a comparatively late stage of its growth, its earlier names being *Ekāntika*, *Bhāgavata*, *Pañcarātra* or *Sātvata*. With Vāsudeva as the central figure, the pantheon came to include other Vṛṣṇi-Vīras, who were in direct blood relation with him. Together they formed the Pañca Vṛṣṇi-Vīras, the five hero-gods who came to form the core of the *Pañcarātra* worship. Vāsudeva was the *para*, the supreme cause and the final resting place of everything. His divine will (*icchā*) is projected towards his consort Śrī-Lakṣmī who in her dual aspect of matter and action (*bhūti* and *kriyā*) receives it and it is this close combination of three powers, *icchāśakti*, *bhūtiśakti* and *kriyāśakti* which results in the creation of the six *guṇas*, *Jñāna* (knowledge), *Aiśvarya* (lordship), *Śakti* (power), *Bala* (strength), *Vīrya* (virility) and *Tejas* (splendour). The totality of the *guṇas* makes up the subtle bodies of Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha known as the *caturvyūhas*, a concept which came to be formulated sometime in the 2nd century B.C. As the deification of Vāsudeva and his near relatives was at the root of this concept, the *Bhakti* cult centred around him essentially mono-theistic. The four *Vyūhas* had to merge into one god, a composite four-headed divinity. The couplet incorporated in the *Nāgapatnīstuti* of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* (10.16-45) demonstrates the idea of the composite amalgam in the characteristic manner "*Namaḥ Kṛṣṇāya Rāmāya Vāsudeva-sutāya ca/ Pradyumnāya Aniruddhāya Sātvatām Pataye namaḥ*". The concept of one in four described in the cult treatises as *caturvyūha* of Viṣṇu *Caturmūrti* is strikingly illustrated by

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the four-headed and four-armed early medieval Viṣṇu images known as *Vaikuṇṭha*. Rather than the plurality of separate incarnated divinities, the *Pañcarātra* doctrine and its iconic manifestation preferred to a composite amalgam of the folk beliefs at various levels, their anthropomorphic demi-gods symbolically representing hero-clan gods, the blend surmounted by the god of gods, Vāsudeva, identified with Viṣṇu, the ultimate source of everything. *Vaikuṇṭhopāsanā*, a composite *upāsanā* in a single manifestation was the easiest path to salvation, to the attainment of the ultimate, within the reach of all.

Whether it be the atheist *Sāṅkhyas* on the path of knowledge or the theist *Śaivas* and *Vaiṣṇavas*, the goal of life always remained the same, liberation (*mokṣa*) from the mundane world for an irrevocable merging into the ultimate, be it formless Universal Principle or an anthropomorphically conceived *Īśvara*, the pursuit and worship of the formless, however, is always difficult, beyond the grasp of the intellect, unappealing to the mind, difficult to meditate upon consciously. Realizing this the *Gītā* says (12.5) and advocates the intensely personal *upāsanā* of Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva. The momentum of the *Bhakti* cult brought the icons into the limelight. Icons were created to bestow the formless with visual form and enable the lay devotee to transcend beyond himself into a state of eternally blissful salvated union with his god. The images are thus *Saguṇa* manifestation of *Nirguṇa Parabrahma*, the path to the *Parabrahma* led either through the ecstasy of the *upāsanā* of an imaged *Īśvara* or through the intellectual metaphysical exercise of the various *Darśanas* and doctrinaire cults. As the *Bhakti* cult expanded its popular base to become a major socio-religious movement, the philosophies and the doctrines had to take recourse to the images to express themselves in a more appealing idiom. The *Ardhanārīśvara*, the *Vilakṣaṇa Sadāśiva* and the *Vaikuṇṭha Viṣṇu* were the visual illuminants along the path of liberation as conceived by the cult doctrines. The personification of the ultimate metaphysical reality through the images was the final achievement of the artist-sculptor who followed the philosophers and the thinkers to give "form" to the doctrines and shape to their thoughts and to translate their *mantras* into visual language. These images thus constitute the ultimate in icon making. There could be no other higher motivation for fashioning an icon than the projection of the Ultimate Reality (Supreme Principle) in all its grand complexity. It is the *Saguṇa*, defining the *Nirguṇa*. In the final moment of reckoning; the two : *Saguṇa* and *Nirguṇa* are not really different, to put it in the words of Saint Jñāneśvara "*Tuja Saguṇa Mhaṇu kī Nirguṇa re/ Saguṇa Nirguṇa eka Govindu re//* " Oh lord how to address you; as *Saguṇa* or *Nirguṇa*, in fact both are ultimately the same i.e. Govinda".

This is an attempt to show that finally the ancient artist-sculptors succeeded in preparing an image based on the philosophy, leading the devotees towards the path of salvation or god realization to which I like to call *Bimba-Brahma*. As *Nāda-Brahma* is in vocal music, *Śabda-Brahma* in grammar, and *Advaita-Brahma* in Vedānta Philosophy, it is *Bimba-Brahma* in iconography.

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THE *KṢĀNTIJĀTAKA* STORY SCULPTURED IN AJANTA CAVES

Milind S. Joshi*

Introductory :

The *Jātakamālā* of Ārya Śūra is also called *Bodhisattvāvadānamālā* which title explains the nature of this work being a collection (i. e. garland) of the great and glorious acts (*avadānas*) of Bodhisattva. These stories illustrated the value of *Pāramitas* or perfections necessary for the attainment of Buddha-hood. All the stories state in the opening phrases, the object to illustrate which the story is narrated. The ideal of Bodhisattva developed under the impact of Mahāyāna (or Great Vehicle). In earlier Buddhism or Hīnayāna, the Bodhisattva was conceived simply as a previous incarnation of Buddha. According to this concept, Buddha, in a long series of transmigrations as a Bodhisattva, did many deeds of kindness before achieving his perfection or Buddha-hood. The early *Jātaka* tales illustrate that Bodhisattva can be incarnated as men or animals, but the more advanced Bodhisattvas were to be adored and prayed to for achieving one's *nirvāṇa*.

The Pāli *Jātakas* are 547 in number. The number does not correspond to exactly 547 tales, because some of these are repetitions in a different setting or in variant version.

The *Jātakamālā* consists of 34 stories. Many of these are traceable to the Pāli *Jātakas* and the works like *Cariyapiṭaka* and Apadāna. The author of *Jātakamālā* may have also drawn upon the Sanskrit versions of the *Vinayapiṭaka*.

The Source Literature :

The source of the *Jātakamālā* in Sanskrit is the extensive scattered literature in Pāli. The Pāli canon consists of three sections called *piṭakas*. These three are known as the *Vinaya*, *Sutta* (*Sūtra*) and *Abhidhamma*. The largest and most important of the *Tripiṭakas* is the *Sutta piṭaka*. It is divided into five *Nikāya* (Groups):

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1. *Dīgha* (*Dīrgha* i.e. Long) *Nikāya*, a collection of long sermons.
2. *Majjhima* (*Madhyama* i.e. Medium) *Nikāya*, shorter sermons.
3. *Saṃyutta* (*Saṃyukta*, Connected) *Nikāya*, brief pronouncements.
4. *Aṅguttara* (Graduated) *Nikāya*.
5. *Khuddaka* (Minor) *Nikāya*, miscellaneous works in prose and verse.

These stories are written in simple Pāli language, which was understood by the ordinary man. The Pāli *Jātakas* were simple in style, as different from the ornate character of Classical Sanskrit. They contained many fine passages but were largely prosaic and repetitive. This character of simplicity in style and prosaic repetition of stock phrases and descriptions is found in the Sanskrit of *Jātakamālā* also.

About Ārya Śūra :

We know very little about the life or about the date of Ārya Śūra, the author of *Jātakamālā*, who is the forerunner of the poets of Classical, chaste and ornate Sanskrit. He, however, seems to be considerably indebted to Kumāralāta and his *Kalpanāmaṇḍaṭikā*. He, therefore, cannot be much older than the beginning of the 4th century A. D., and as one of his works was translated into Chinese in 434 A. D., as is noted by Dr. A. C. Banerjee in his Introduction to *Subhāṣita-Ratnakaraṇḍaka-Kathā*. According to Tārānātha, the famous Buddhist historian, Ārya Śūra readily resolved to sacrifice his life and gave his body as food to save the tigress and her newly born young ones. This may perhaps account for the inspiration of Ārya Śūra and his *Jātakamālā*. The following works are ascribed to Ārya Śūra :

(1) Subhāṣita-Ratnakaraṇḍaka-Kathā,

(2) Pāramitāsamāsa,

(3) Prātimokṣasūtra-paddhati,

(4) Bodhisattvajātakadharmagaṇḍī and

(5) Supathanirdeśaparikathā.

The *Jātakamālā* had two commentaries: One by a Dharmakīrti and the other by an unknown author.

About *Kṣāntijātaka* story :

The Master told the story while he was dwelling at *Jetavana* about a wrathful brother.

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The Master asked, "Why after taking orders under the dispensation of the Buddha who knows not what wrath is, do you show anger? Wise men in bygone days, though they suffered a thousand stripes and their hands, feet, ears, nose and head cut-off, showed no anger against another" and so saying he narrated this story.

When the king of Kāśī named Kalābu was ruling Benaras, Bodhisattva was born in a rich Brāhmin family as Kundaka Kumāra. He acquired knowledge of all the sciences at Takṣaśilā and afterwards settled down as a householder. On the death of his parents looking at his pile of treasure, he himself thought "My kinsmen who amassed this treasure are all gone without taking it with them, now it is for me to own it and in my turn to depart". After taking ascetic life, he gave all his wealth to the person who deserves it. After that, he went to the Himālayas to lead an ascetic life. There he dwelt a long time living on wild fruits. For the sake of procuring salt and vinegar, he gradually made his way to Benaras, where he took up his abode in the royal garden. One day, he met the commander-in-chief, while he was roaming for alms. The commander pleased with the character of the ascetic for the propriety of his deportment brought him into the house and fed him with the food prepared for him. Later, as per the request of the chief, the ascetic stayed in the royal garden.

One day, the drunken king Kalābu came into the royal garden with his company of dancers and musicians. A royal couch was arranged for him, which he occupied with his favourite of the harem on his lap. A musical entertainment, similar to that of Śakka was arranged for the enjoyment of the king. Afterwards, the king and his favourite fell asleep. Then the musicians thought to themselves. "For whose sake, we are providing music, he has gone to sleep, what need is there for us to sing?" They kept aside their musical instruments and went to roam around the garden, for collecting flowers and fruits. At this moment, they saw a Bodhisattva who was seated in a relaxed mood under a flowering tree. Seeing the women, the Bodhisattva said, "Come here ladies, sit down and hear some ethics and morals from the priest, until the king awakes". On their request, the ascetic preached the doctrine to them.

After some time, the favourite of the harem woke up the king. The king not seeing dancers and musicians asked, "Where are those wretches gone?", She said, "They are gone away to the royal garden to listen to an ascetic". The king in a rage seized his sword and went off in haste saying, "I will give the false ascetic a lesson". The women at the garden seeing the king coming in an enraged mood, took away the sword from the king's hand and pacified him. Then the king asked, "What doctrine are you preaching monk?" The ascetic replied, "The doctrine of patience". "What is patience?" asked the king. The ascetic said, "Not being angry, when men abuse you and strike you and revile you". Then the king said, "I will see

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now the reality of your patience". Immediately, the king asked his executioner, "Take and drag off this vile rogue of an ascetic and give him two thousand stripes". With the result of it, the ascetic suffered with pains and his skin was cut and flesh and blood came out from the fissures of the skin. The king asked, "What doctrine do you preach monk?" The ascetic replied to the king, "about the doctrine of patience".

The king again summoned the executioner and asked, "Cut off both the hands of the false ascetic". Then the executioner took his axe and cut both the hands. As per the instructions, the executioner cut off the feet of the ascetic. The blood flowed from the extremities of his hands and feet like lac juice from a leaking jar. Again the king asked about the doctrine. The ascetic replied, "Sir, my patience dwells not in the extremities of my hands and feet. It is not there, but it is deep seated somewhere else". The king ordered again the executioner, "Cut off his nose and ears". The executioner did so, now the whole body of the ascetic is covered with blood. Again the king asked of his doctrine. The ascetic gave fitting reply. Finally, the king asked the ascetic, "Lie down, false monk and then see, exalt your patience". So saying, he struck the Bodhisattva above the heart with his foot and he took himself off.

After the departure of the king, the commander-in-chief wiped the blood from his body and said, "If revered Sir, you would be angry with one who has sinned against you, be angry with the king, but with no one else". After that the king was swallowed by the Mother earth and the Bodhisattva died on that same day, whereas in Ārya Śūra's *Jātakamālā,* the king Kalābu finally cut off the head of the ascetic with his sword. The Master ended the story and justified the Birth. At the time, Devadatta was Kalābu, the king of Kāśī, Sāriputta was the Commander-in-chief and I myself was the ascetic, the preacher of patience.

The *Kṣāntijātaka* story sculptured in Ajanta caves:

Ajanta caves register three fragmentary episodes of the *Jātaka* separated by a pilaster motif, two episodes on the left side and one episode on the right side of the panel. The upper left side of the panel shows a royal procession. Here are two elephants; each one mounted by two persons. The rider of the elephant in the foreground is a noble man holding an *aṅkuśa* in his left hand and placing the pointed end on the right hand and placing the pointed end on the right ear of the elephant, while the raised right hand suggests a loud cry to threaten the animal to move swiftly. The woman on his back holding the noble man with her hands at the waist appears to be the favourite lady of the king. She is shown wearing a series of anklets and decked in ornamentation. The lower left side of the panel represents the fighting scene. The person with royal dress and headgear is the drunken king Kalābu approaching the ascetic to attack him with his companions. The man with his raised hands appears to be the ascetic,

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who was trying to pacify the raging king. The king is shown in a very ferocious mood, attacking the men of the ascetic with his army of soldiers riding on horses. A fallen man in between the legs of the king suggests the magnitude of the attack.

The third episode, on the right side of the panel depicts the scene of the royal harem outside the palace complex. The portrayal of the gateway obviously suggests the outlet to the royal garden, where the king Kalābu, seated on a throne keeps his left hand resting on the throne. The favourite lady of the king is seated beside him on a stool separately. The seating arrangement obviously shows the difference between the queen and the low ranking person, though the latter happens to be the favourite one to the king. There are several scenes in Amarāvatī Art where the king is shown seated along with chief queen on a single throne, whereas, here, a stool is shown separately for the favourite lady, who belongs probably to a lower class.

There is a group of women standing and sitting on the right side of the king, witnessing the scene. Some of them are even holding wine and fruits to serve the king in the garden. This is a scene of beheading a woman who went to the garden to listen to the doctrine of patience from the Bodhisattva. A woman kneeling at the feet of the favourite lady of the king is the one, who was going to be beheaded is shown requesting her to stop the punishment, whereas the king is shown with his outstretched hand asking one of the ladies, to bring a sword. A lady emerging out from the gateway is shown carrying a royal sword with her two hands to hand over it to the king with hesitation. The broken panel is mended irregularly and hence the difference in facial features and the lower body of the ascetic. The other details of the *Jātaka* are missing.

The *Jātaka* is finely portrayed on the architrave of a temple at Sāranātha. The synoptic sequential narrative mode of the *Jātaka* is noticed on a lintel of the temple of the doorway. At present, it is displayed in Sāranātha Museum, Sāranātha. In the first of these four panels, i.e. the second from the proper left end, where the Bodhisattva is shown seated in the meditation surrounded by five dancing girls, two on one side and three on the other, seated with folded hands in the meditation surrounded by five dancing girls, two on one side and three on the other, seated with folded hands and apparently listening to the ascetic. The next two panel sections show five girls engaged in a musical performance. The central girl, who is dancing, is clad in a loin cloth, a scarf falling over her arms, while a third garment covers her breast. The remaining four girls play a flute, cymbals, a drum and a pair of tabors (*mṛdaṅga*). It is to be observed that the king himself is absent in both these scenes. The last panel i.e. the second from the proper right shows the torture of the Bodhisattva. He is seated with a rosary in his left hand while his right hand was being cut off with a sword by a male figure, who was

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being restrained from the act by two girls, one holding his legs and the other putting him from behind by his shoulders. The aggressor must be the executioner who, according to the story, cut off the hands, feet, nose and ears of the Bodhisattva. On grounds of artistic style, the lintel is dated to the Gupta period.

There are sites in Udayana, commemorating the *Jātaka* stories. A *stūpa* at the capital of Mangalawar on the bank of the river Swat marked the site of Kṣāṅtivādin's dismemberment. At Ajantā, the beheading of a woman by the king Kalābu, who went to listen the Bodhisattva, an episode of the Kṣāṅtivāda Jātaka, is portrayed in a realistic way. Here, the intact portion of the fresco shows a lady kneeling at the feet of Rājā, who is seated on the throne in the palace looking very angry. He holds a naked sword in his right hand at the point of striking down the beautiful lady kneeling before him. The artist has drawn very delicately the frills of the diaphanous costume, the pearl jewelry and neatly dressed coiffure bedecked with ribbons and flowers. The lady attendants on either side of the throne are shown in astonishing moods. The *Jātaka* conveys three distinct morals: one is that to those who have wholly imbibed the virtue of forbearance are great in keeping their tranquility, there is nothing unbearable. The second one is that the sensual pleasures lead a man to become addicted to wicked behaviour, which brings him into ruin, and the third one conveys about the inconstancy of material prosperity.

Conclusion :

Kṣāntijātaka corresponds to Pāli *Khāntivādijātaka* no. 313. This story is sculptured in Ajanta caves and stanzas- 4, 15 and 19 from this work are engraved under it.

निवसन्ति हि यत्रैव सन्तः सदुणभूषणाः ।
तन्मङ्गल्यं मनोज्ञं च तत्तीर्थं तत्तपोवनम् ।।

अगर्हितां जातिमवाप्य मानुषी-
मनूनभावं पटुभिस्तथेन्द्रियैः ।
अवश्यमृत्युर्न करोति यः शुभं
प्रमादभाक्प्रत्यहमेष वञ्च्यते ।।

अलंक्रियन्ते कुसुमैर्महीरुहा-
स्तडिदुणैस्तोयविलम्बिनो घनाः ।
सरांसि मत्तभ्रमरैः सरोरुहै-
र्गुणैर्विशेषाधिगतैस्तु देहिनः ।।

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Thus while discoursing on the virtue of forbearance, the *Muni* is taken as an example. On account of the vices of rashness and wrath, the king for example of this story is ruined. It is also to be understood for expounding the miserable consequences of sensual pleasures. The sensual pleasures lead a man to become addicted to wicked behaviour, which leads him into ruin. It may also be known with the object of showing the inconstancy of material prosperity.

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ŚRĪMADBHĀGAVATAPURĀṆA'S UṢĀ-ANIRUDDHA-KATHĀ AND GUJARĀTĪ OKHĀHARAṆA - A COMPARATIVE STUDY **

Usha Brahmachari*

King Parīkṣita was the grand son of Arjun and son of Abhimanyu. He was cursed by a brahmin that he would die in seven days. So, the King decided to give up his kingly duties and to learn of goals in life.While he was waiting for his impending death, a saint named Śukadevajī was looking for a disciple to whom he could impart his knowledge. So Śukadevajī approached the King Parīkṣita and agreed to teach him. Their conversation was uninterrupted for seven days,during which the King did not eat,drink or sleep. Thus born was one of the finest epics in Purāṇas. This was called *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* in which Śukadevajī explained to the King, the goal in life –about searching and understanding the supreme and absolute truth-Kṛṣṇa.

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (also known as *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* or simply *Bhāgavatam*) is one of the Puranic texts of Hindu literature. Its focus is the process of *Bhakti Yoga* in which Kṛṣṇa is declared *Svayaṁ Bhagavān.*

The *Bhāgavatam* takes the form of a story being told by a great *Ṛṣi* called Sūta Gosvāmī, to a group of sages assembled to ask him questions in regard to various *avatāras* or descents of Viṣṇu within this earthly world. Sūta Gosvāmī then, relates the *Bhāgavatam* as he would have heard from Śukadevajī. The *Bhāgavatam* contains following verse in reference to its significance as a Vedantic text.

Sarva-vedānta-sāram hi Śrī-Bhāgavatam iṣyate ।
Tad-rasāmṛta-tṛptasya nānyatra syād ratiḥ kvacit ॥

Bhāgavata Purāṇa 12.13.15

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is accepted, as the essence of all Vedic literature and Vedantic philosophy. Whosoever has tasted the mellow of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam,* would never be attracted to any other literature.

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Poem of *Daśamaskandha*[1]

Gujarātī Kavi Premānanda was greatly inspired by the epics like *Mahābhārata, Rāmāyaṇa* and *Bhāgavata*. He had prepared many stories based on characters from these epics. *Kavi* Premānanda had already expressed his desire to prepare a similar work in *Gujarātī* which would be more or less similar to as that of Vyāsa's original *Bhāgavata*.

In *Daśamaskandha, Kavi* Premānanda made several changes in the *Bhāgavata*'s story. He had focused more on events and gave these events a special touch of him, before presenting to the audience. This unique style is considered as *Kavi* Premānanda's speciality. It can be seen in *Daśamaskandha* in the form of use of *Kavi's* descriptive power, satire, natural flow and use of *anuprāsa* etc. In *Daśamaskandha,* one can see many beautiful descriptions. Here *Kavi* Premānanda has shown his deep understanding of situations and of human expressions. *Kavi* has used proper, perfect and simple words which are easily recitable by common man.

In *Prācīna Gujarātī Vārtā Sāhitya*, there is a special place for quizzes/ puzzles. To ask a quiz/puzzle and to answer the same was considered an intelligent exercise. In *Okhāharaṇa* also, Okhā and Aniruddha are shown to be exchanging very interesting quizzes and puzzles. How two lovers used quizzing to test each other, can be known from such *Prācīna Gujarātī Sāhitya*.

Literature of *Śṛṅgāra* dreams

The story of *Okhāharaṇa* starts with *Śṛṅgāra* dream that Okhā sees in her sleep. Due to Pārvatī Devī's *varadāna* , Okhā sees Aniruddha in the dreams. Later on , Okhā takes help of her friend Citralekhā to locate Aniruddha and then marries him. *Okhāharaṇa racanā* is based on *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and there is lot of influence of this on *prācīna* literature. In *prācīna* literature, there is certainly a mention of women having *Śṛṅgāra* dreams. In Vedic period, this was considered a very common phenomenon. Many ancient tribal communities used to treat such dreams as very pious. Also, using from *Bṛhatkathā* of ancient times and from other similar contemporary beliefs, traditions etc. Purāṇa like *Bhāgavata* and *Harivaṁśa* have blended stories of *svapna svayaṁvara* with Śrī Kṛṣṇa characters and religious minded people accepted such stories heartily and made them eternally popular. Such stories had special and lasting effect on *Prācīna Gujarātī* literature also. The literatures of Vīrsiṁha,

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1. *Daśamaskandha*-2, Gujarat University Prakashan, Ed. by Umashankar Joshi and Harivallabh Bhayani, I Ed., 1971.

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Janārdana, Kānha, Viṣṇudāsa, Nākara, Narsimha, Navala, Manpuri, Mādhavadāsa etc. were attracted by these stories and each one of them presented such tales in their own styles.

There are many stories in Sanskrit, Prakrit and *Prācīna Gujarātī* Literature, which are based on *Śṛṅgāra svapna* e.g. "Līlāvai kahā" in Prākrit, Bhāsakṛta '*Svapnavāsavadattā*', "*Siṁhāsana Batrīsī*" and "*Vetāla Pacīsī*" in *Gujarātī*.

With this background, we now proceed to study in some details the main work of *Okhāharaṇa* as described in Purāṇas and *Gujarātī* literature.

For convenience, the topic is divided into three parts as under :

A. Details of *Kavi* Premānanda's *Okhāharaṇa*

B. Details of Uṣāharaṇa as in *Śrīmadbhāgavatam*

C. A comparison between Uṣāharaṇa from *Śrīmadbhāgavatam* and *Kavi* Premānanda's *Okhāharaṇa*

A. Premānanda's *Okhāharaṇa* in *Gujarātī* (29 *Kaḍavāṁ*)

Once King Parīkṣita asked Śukadevajī about the *Kathā-ākhyāna* (Story) of Okhā. Here, we must appreciate the fact that although the name of *nāyikā* is Uṣā, over, centuries, the name Uṣā seems to have been changed to Okhā. Śukadeva said that Lord Śaṅkara had given thousand hands to King Bāṇāsura-just like Lord Kṛṣṇa had similarly in the form of *sudarśanacakra*. The original story of *Okhāharaṇa* is interestingly narrated in sixty second *Adhyāya of Daśamaskandha* in *Bhāgavata-Purāṇa*. In this *Ākhyāṇa of Okhā*, Aniruddha is kidnapped by Okhā's friend Citralekhā. Following is the gist of the story as described in *Okhāharaṇa*.

Bāṇāsura was the son of King Bali. Bāṇāsura was a brave warrior. He worshipped Lord Śaṅkara and did his penance and praised Lord Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara was pleased with this and rewarded Bāṇāsura with thousand hands. Bāṇāsura was happy with this gift yet he misused this gift of God. Also, he was not so happy as he had nobody to fight with someone who was equal to him in strength. Once agian, he approached *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara and demanded a warrior with whom he could fight. Angry with this unreasonable demand, *Bhagavān* cursed Bāṇāsura and said that his hands would be chopped by the grand father in-law of his own daughter. *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara also said that when Bāṇāsura's flag is broken, he would fight with his enemy.

There is another story woven with this main story. Okhā is the daughter of Bāṇāsura. Her friend is named Citralekhā. Once these girls met Devī Pārvatī at the bank of a river. Okhā praised Pārvatī Devī. Pleased with this, Pārvatī Devī gave three boons to Okhā. Devī

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told her that she would marry her beloved one, three times. Also, that her friend Citralekhā would help her in meeting her dream king.

Here, King Bāṇāsura was afraid that his death would be certain at the hands of grand father in-law of his own daughter. He decided himself to kill his child. Suddenly, Nāradajī appeared and stopped Bāṇāsura from doing this, citing it would amount to *bāla-hatyā*. Nāradajī advised him to, instead ensure that his daughter Okhā was not married. Convinced, Bāṇāsura put his daughter in a *Ekadaṇḍīyā*-mansion (a palace on one pillar) where no one else was allowed to meet her. Only her friend Citralekhā was allowed to stay with Okhā (to give her company). Also, the palace was surrounded by hundreds of guards to ensure that no one enters the palace. As time passed, Okhā entered in her teenage. She suffered from *Kāmajvara*. She wondered how could she survive without marriage. Citralekhā advised her not to think on such lines as her father would certainly kill her if he comes to know of Okhā's desire to get married. She also advised Okhā to do fast in which she could not eat anything with salt in it. (*Alūṇāvrata*). Okhā followed her friend's advise and went on for the fast.

On *Vaiśākha Suda Dvādaśī*, Okhā dreamt of her dream man and in the dream itself she married him. She got her beloved husband in *Svapna*. When she woke up, she realized that it was a dream only and felt it was a reel story and not a real one.! Distressed as she was, she started crying. Upon hearing this story from Okhā, Citralekhā reminded her of Devī Pārvatī's boon. Okhā too now remembered this and asked Citralekhā to bring her dream man. But she did not know anything about him! Distressed again that she won't get her dream man, Okhā wanted to commit suicide. But Citralekhā helped her again. Citralekhā, as her name indicated , was a good painter. Based on description given by Okhā, she drew few pictures and showed to Okhā. Citralekhā drew pictures of Lord Kṛṣṇa, son Pradyumna and grandson Aniruddha. Looking at Aniruddha's picture, Okhā jumped with joy and asked Citralekhā to bring her *Rājakumāra* Aniruddha.

Citralekhā was a *yogīnī* too and so she took the form of bird and flew to Dvārakā in the night itself. As soon as she entered the fort, she was confronted with *Sudarśanacakra* which would kill her. Again Nāradajī came in the picture. He allowed Citralekhā to kidnap Aniruddha (Nāradajī did so as he thought this was what Kṛṣṇa wanted him to do). Citralekhā lifted sleeping Aniruddha along with the swing (in which he was sleeping) and came to Śoṇitapura at Okhā's palace. Meanwhile, Aniruddha also dreamt that he was being kidnapped. When he woke up, he was angry. Citralekhā told him the whole story of Okhā's dream and about her marriage with him in the dream. Aniruddha was not happy with this as he was not ready to marry *Asura's* daughter. Here, Nāradajī convinced Aniruddha to marry Okhā and he helped them to do *Gāndharvavivāha*. Both of them were enjoying their married life. So much so that Aniruddha totally forgot Dvārakā. Meanwhile, security guards of Okhā wondered

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about Okhā's behaviour and started doubting her virginity. They informed king Bāṇāsura about this. At the same time, Bāṇāsura's flag was broken which reminded him about Śaṅkara's curse. Scared as he was, King Bāṇāsura rushed to Okhā's palace and was surprised to see Aniruddha there. He fought with Aniruddha . Okhā too was afraid and wondered how Aniruddha would fight with thousand hands of King Bāṇāsura. She started crying and prayed Śrī Kṛṣṇa to help her husband and his grand son, Aniruddha.

Aniruddha won the battle but at the same time Śoṇitapura was flooded by water. All *Asuras* went away. Taking advantage of this confusion, Bāṇāsura arrested Aniruddha and tied him with *Nāgapāśa*. He kept Aniruddha and Okhā in prison.

Now Śukadevajī narrated the story of what was happening in Dvārakā. At Dvārakā, everyone was wondering how and why Aniruddha disappeared. Here again, Nāradajī came and informed them about what had happened to Aniruddha and that both Okhā and Aniruddha were prisoned by Bāṇāsura. He also informed them about their *Gāndharvaviṿāha*. *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to Śoṇitapura. Bāṇāsura was angry as he did not want to have relations with a cow boy (Kṛṣṇa). He then prayed to *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara. Listening to the woes of Bāṇāsura, *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara became aṅgry and entered the war with his *Pināka*. *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the war with his *Sudarśana Cakra*.

At the end, the warriors compromised and all was well that ended well. Aniruddha met Kṛṣṇa. Aniruddha married Okhā with full rituals and customs of *Gujarātī* culture. King Bāṇāsura did *kanyādāna* of daughter Okhā. The marriage ceremony included *maṅgala Ferās* and marriage songs etc. This way, we get to know the customs of marriages prevailing in the then period of Gujarat.

When Okhā was going to her in-law's place, Okhā's mother gave her advice about how to stay and behave at in-law's place and so on. Finally, Okhā left for Dvārakā with her husband Aniruddha and *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

At the end, *Kavi* Premānanda says that any person who listens to this *Okhāharaṇa kathā* with proper interest, will be relieved from all pains and *Bhagavān* would bless him. In the colophon (*Puṣpikā*), of the *Okhāharaṇakathā*, it is written that in *Vīrakṣetra in Vāsavādi*, *Vipracaturvaṁśī caste*, Premānanda with pleasure, did *jayakāra* of *Vaikuṇṭhanātha* (*Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa).[2]

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2. *Okhāharaṇa*, Premānanda, Nākara and Viṣṇudāsa, Gujarata Vernacular Soc., Ahmedabad, II Ed., 1946.

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B. Story of Uṣā – Aniruddha episode as per 62nd / 63rd *Adhyāya of Daśamaskandha* in *Bhāgavata.*

Adhyāya 62:

King Parīkṣita asked Śukadevajī about the marriage of Bāṇāsura's daughter Uṣā with *Yaduvaṁśī* Aniruddha. Due to this marriage, *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa and *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara had a war with each other. Parīkṣita wanted to listen to this interesting story from Śukadevajī.

King Bali's eldest son Bāṇāsura was staunch *Śivabhakta.* He prayed and praised *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara. Pleased by this, *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara gave him a *varadāna* of one thousand hands. Bāṇāsura was happy with this but was looking for a fight with someone equal in strength but found no one. He went to Śaṅkara and asked for a warrior of his strength. Listening to such an unreasonable demand, *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara was angry and cursed Bāṇāsura that when his flag would break, he would meet with a warrior of his strength.

Bāṇāsura had a young daughter Uṣā. She once dreamt that *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa's grand son Aniruddha and she met in a dream. Bāṇāsura's minister Kubhāṇḍa's daughter Citralekhā was a good friend of Uṣā. Uṣā told her the story of her dream. Citralekhā drew some pictures from which Uṣā found out her *svapnapuruṣa-Rājakumāra.* Citralekhā was *yogīnī* too. She went to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Dvārakā and by *yogasiddhi,* she brought Aniruddha to Śoṇitapura at Uṣā's palace, although the palace had full security. In this palace, Uṣā and Aniruddha met. Uṣā was no longer virgin. Guards of Uṣā informed the king that something was wrong with her daughter. King Bāṇāsura came to Uṣā's palace and saw Aniruddha with her. King was angry and both fought with each other. After a fierce battle, King Bāṇāsura tied Aniruddha in *Nāgapāśa.* Seeing this, Uṣā started crying.

Adhyāya 63:

Here in Dvārakā, everyone was worried about Aniruddha. Nāradajī came to Dvārakā and informed the *Yādavas* about kidnapping of Aniruddha. He also advised them to go to Śoṇitapura, the place of King Bāṇāsura. *Yādavas* went their and saw Aniruddha as a prisoner. This led to inevitable war between *Yādavas* and King Bāṇāsura's army. *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa also entered the war. Seeing Bāṇāsura cornered, his mother ran to the ground, stripped her self of clothes and stood in front *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Embarrassed, *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked the otherway. Taking advantage of this, Bāṇāsura ran away from the field and saved his life. He prayed to *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara and asked for his help. Lord Śiva came and threw his *Agneyāstra.* In reply, Śrī Kṛṣṇa used his *Brahmāstra.* There was a war between two greats- *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara and *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa chopped all thousand hands of Bāṇāsura

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with his *cakra*. Now Śiva praised Kṛṣṇa and Bāṇāsura got *abhayavaradāna*. Bāṇāsura in turn, did *kanyādāna* of his daughter Uṣā and married her to Aniruddha –grand son of Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa went back to Dvārakā with bride and bridegroom.

It was also said that anyone who listened to this story of war and win of Kṛṣṇa , will never be defeated.

C: *Bhāgavata's* Uṣā-Aniruddha episode and Premānanda's *Okhāharaṇa Kathā* in *Gujarātī* – a comparison

So far, we have seen the details of both the stories as written in *Bhāgavata* and in *Okhāharaṇa*. It will only be appropriate to mention the differences in the two stories of the same event.

The differences indicate that in vernacular languages, poets used their imagination to suit local culture, to make the story more popular among common men of the region .

Sr. No.	*Bhāgavata* *Uṣā – Aniruddha* episode	Premānanda's *Okhāharaṇa Kathā*
1	King Parīkṣita asked Śukadevajī about Uṣā – Aniruddha marriage and also about war between *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa and *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara	King Parīkṣita requested Śukadevajī to describe Okhā's *Ākhyāna*, particularly interesting story from *Bhāgavata*'s *Daśamaskandha* where in the story of Aniruddha being kidnapped was described.
2	King Bali's son Bāṇāsura was a staunch *Śivabhakta* and had received thousand hands as a *varadāna* from *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara. Bāṇāsura was the King of Śoṇitapura and after receiving the gift of thousand hands, he wanted to fight with someone equal to his strength and requested *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara to provide one such warrior. Listening to such an absurd request, Śaṅkara was very angry and told him that when his flag would be broken, he would meet someone equal to his strength.	Same story but with the addition that Bāṇāsura was told that father in-law (Kṛṣṇa) of his daughter Okhā will fight with him. Therefore, Bāṇāsura was against the marriage of his daughter.

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3 King Bāṇāsura's daughter dreamt of a *Rājkumāra* and in the dream itself, she married him, who turned out to be Aniruddha-grand son of *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa.	There is a side story here. Okhā received a *varadāna* from Devī Pārvatī that Okhā would marry with a dream-man on the night of *Vaiśākha-suda-dvādaśī* and that her friend Citralekhā would help her in this. But Bāṇāsura was not happy and wanted to kill Okhā. However, Nāradajī convinced Bānāsura not to do *bāla-hatyā* but instead to keep his daughter in isolated palace.
4 This part of the story is not found in *Bhāgavata*.	Devī Pārvatī asked Okhā to do a *vrata*-fast and take only that food which had no salt in it (*Alūṇāvrata*). This, she told, would help her in marrying her dream man. Okhā was staying in an isolated palace and had now entered teenage and wanted to get married. Her friend Citralekhā reminded her of all the security men around the palace and remain quiet. She also reminded Okhā of Pārvatī's *varadāna* and to wait.
5 Uṣā met a man in her dreams and told of this to her friend Citralekhā but also told her that she didn't know anything about him. Citralekhā drew some pictures and Uṣā found her dream man from these pictures.	Same story but in addition, Okhā told Citralekhā to bring her dream man, other-wise she would commit suicide.
6 Citralekhā was a *yogīnī* and went to Dvārakā and brought Aniruddha to Śoṇitapura at Uṣā's place. Here, Uṣā met Aniruddha and she was no longer a virgin girl.	The story of how Citralekhā brought Aniruddha is more detailed here. Citralekhā took the form of a bird and went to Dvārakā. Here she was attacked by *cakra* but Nāradajī saved her. Aniruddha was fast asleep on his swing. Citralekhā lifted Aniruddha alongwith his swing and brought to Śoṇitapura. Here, Aniruddha too saw a dream in which he found himself

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	being kidnapped by a lady. He was very wild because of this. Citralekhā told him the whole story and Nāradajī convinced him to marry Okhā. The marriage took place in the form of *Gāndharvavivāha*. Aniruddha totally forgot about Dvārakā.
7 Security guards at Uṣā's palace noticed peculiar behaviour of Uṣā and informed King Bāṇāsura of that. Bāṇāsura came to Uṣā's palace and saw her with a man. There was a war between Bāṇāsura and Aniruddha.	Story is same here except that there is an additional information about Bāṇā's flag breaking which reminded Bāṇāsura of *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara's curse.
8 During the fight, Bāṇāsura tied Aniruddha with *Nāgapāśa*. Seeing this, Uṣā started crying. Both Uṣā and Aniruddha were sent to prison by Bāṇāsura.	Here too, Okhā started crying and asked for help from *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa. Aniruddha defeated Bāṇāsura's warriors. Suddenly there was a flood at Śoṇitapura. All *Asuras* ran away. Taking advantage of confusion, Bāṇāsura tied Aniruddha with *Nāgapāśa*.
9 In Dvārakā, everyone was worried about Aniruddha. Nāradajī told them to go to Śoṇitapura. There was a war between *yādavagaṇa* and Bāṇāsura.	Here the story is slightly different. Nāradajī informed people of Dvārakā about Okhā –Aniruddha marriage. Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to Śoṇitapura for this but Bāṇāsura did not want her daughter to marry.
10 Śrī Kṛṣṇa joined the war. Bāṇāsura's army was defeated. To save life of Bāṇāsura, his mother –Koṭarā- ran into the battle field, naked and stood in front of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Embarrassed Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked the other way and Bāṇāsura ran away.	There is no mention of this part of the story in *Okhāharaṇa*.
11 Bāṇāsura requests *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara for help. The war was between *Bhagavān* Śaṅkara and *Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa.	Same story described as a war between *Hari* and *Hara*.

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12 Śrī Kṛṣṇa cut Bāṇā's thousand hands by using *Sudarśana Cakra.*	Here, *Hari* used *Cakra* and *Hara* used his *Pināka.*
13 At the end, Śaṅkara praised Śrī Kṛṣṇa's deeds (*Parākrama*). Bāṇa got *Abhayavaradāna* from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Bāṇāsura in turn, celebrated Uṣā's marriage.	Aniruddha and Śrī Kṛṣṇa met. Bāṇāsura did *Kanyādāna* of Okhā. Okhā's marriage was celebrated with *Gujarātī* style, songs customs etc.
14 Finally, Śrī Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā along with Uṣā and Aniruddha. No further story.	Okhā's mother gave ample advise to her daughter about how to stay and behave at in-laws place.
15 There is a mention here that those who listened to Uṣā –Aniruddha story in the early morning, will always win in the battle. They will never be defeated.	Here too, those who listened to this story of *Okhāharaṇa*, Lord *Jagadīśa* would always bless them. Those who speak,listen or feel these 29 *kaḍavāṁs*, will be free from all kinds of torments.

The story of *Uṣāharaṇa* is written by many other *Gujarātī* poets[3], besides *Kavi* Premānanda. Here are some details of them and some observations.

a. Śāmala also had written *Uṣāharaṇa*. His method of description was different. He mixed *Subhāṣitas* in the main story.

b. *Janārdana kṛta Uṣāharaṇa* was written in *Saṁvat* 1548 and had 220 stanzas. It is the oldest poem on this subject in *Gujarātī*.

c. This was followed by Baroda's *Vaiśya Kavi* Nākara's poem in *Saṁvat* 1600 (approx.). This poet had followed *Harivaṁśapurāṇa*'s *Uṣāharaṇa* with very minor changes. Changes were carried out mainly, to suit people's taste.

3. *Shree Forbus Gujarati Sabha Traimasik*, Mumbai, 4, 1936, Vol. 1, Nos. 3-4, p. 415.

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d. Khambhāta's *Nāgara* poet Viṣṇudāsa might have prepared his poem on *Uṣāharaṇa*, in *Saṁvat* 1634. His composition seems more closer to that of Premānanda.

e. *Kānha kṛuta Uṣāharaṇa* in *Saṁvat* 1800. His poem has more similarity with Viṣṇudāsa's poem.

f. Mādhavadāsa-a *Vālmīka kāyastha* from Surat – is yet another poet in this field. His style was considered nearest to Premānanda's style. Yet one can see no effect of Premānanda's on Mādhavadāsa.

Analysis of Premānanda's *Okhāharaṇa*:

Mahākavi Premānanda's work *Okhāharaṇa*, is said to be written in *Saṁvat* 1723 and again in *Saṁvat* 1732. Consisting of 29 *kaḍavāṁs* (stanzas) and full of *Śṛṅagāra* and *Vīra rasa*, his work of *Okhāharaṇa* is considered the best among all *Gujarātī* poems on *Uṣāharaṇa*. And therefore, many poets, *māṇābhaṭṭas* (a typical story teller who uses vessels as instrument to give rhythm of the poem sung) have added their own imaginations and corrected Premānanda's poem substantially.

Premānanda's poem *Okhāharaṇa* is popular all over Gujarat, on account of the poetic yet simple style of writing and his poems have been more popular than any other poem prepared by his predecessors. It was so popular that it was sung enthusiastically in every household. This probably gives credence to the observation that to suit the occasion, *Kavi* Premānanda seems to have made many changes in original *Uṣāharaṇa* while making his own poem.

***Uṣāharaṇa or Aniruddhaharaṇa ?*[4]**

When one looks analytically at the story of *Uṣāharaṇa*, one wonders if *Uṣāharaṇa* is the proper title of the story or should it be *Aniruddhaharaṇa* ? Word *Uṣāharaṇa* is not to be found in *Bhāgavata*. It is found only in *Harivaṁśa*. In *Gujarātī*, *Kavi* Premānanda has used word *Aniruddhaharaṇa* in a poem written (in manuscript form) in *Saṁvat* 1803.[5] But he has given title *Uṣāharaṇa* in a poem written in another manuscript. Also, in the same poem, second stanza refers to "*Aniruddhaharaṇa kathāya*". If we go by the details of the story, it is clear that it was Aniruddha who was kidnapped and not Uṣā. So, it would be only fair to conclude that the title of this work should have been "*Aniruddhaharaṇa* ".

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4. *Shree Forbus Gujarati Sabha Traimasik*, Mumbai, 4, 1937, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 101.
5. *Okhāharaṇa*, Premānanda, Nākara and Viṣṇudāsa, Gujarāta Vernacular Soc., Ahmedabad, II ed., 1946, pp. 18, 19.

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Origin of '*Uṣāharaṇa*' *kāvya-ākhyāna* is in *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* and *Harivaṁśapurāṇa*. In the later part of *Adhyāya* 62 and 63 of *Daśamaskandha*, there is a brief mention to this story. While, in *Harivaṁśapurāṇa* there is a detailed story of *Uṣāharaṇa* in 116th to 128th *Adhyāya* of *Viṣṇuparva*.

Nāyaka – Nāyikā in Premānanda's *Okhāharaṇa*

Premānanda has described Okhā and Aniruddha very poetically and beautifully too!

Nāyaka Aniruddha is shown as aggressive, bold and passionate also. Moment the *Nāyaka* came across the Bāṇāsura's army, Aniruddha immediately left Okhā and prepared himself to fight the war. *Dānavas* were surprised by the aggressiveness and the boldness of Aniruddha.

Premānada's *Nāyikā* Okhā is shown as a typical Indian woman-soft, sentimental and emotional. Seeing Aniruddha fighting, Okhā was surprised and scared. She requested him to come back as she believed that *Mānavas* cannot win over *Dānavas*. Seeing Aniruddha tied in *Nāgapaśa*, she started crying too.

Thus, throughout this poem, Premānanda has described various characters with a touch of village characteristics. The flow of *kāvya* is very smooth. So much so, that readers are tempted to complete the reading in one sitting.

And even today in interiors of Gujarat, young girls are advised to do *Alūṇāvratá* (in which one does not eat food which has salt in it) on *Vaiśākha Suda Dvādaśi* so that they can get their dream man in marriage.

In other words, study and analysis of such literature give us an insight into the then prevailing culture, customs etc. in the society.

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ĀRYAVASUDHĀRĀDHĀRAṆĪMAHĀVIDYĀ- A WORK ON BUDDHIST *TANTRA*

Meena Pathak*

Āryavasudhārādhāranī Mahāvidyā is a work relating to the Buddhist *Tantra* Literature. The *Tantra* is popularly used to denote a class of literature dealing with the mystical and magical worship of various deities. It is very difficult to define the word *Tantra* . Generally the word *Tantra* is derived from the root *tan* to spread or that which spreads. Dasgupta S.N. is of the opinion that *tan* is the original form of *tanvī* meaning knowledge. *Tantra* therefore refers to the sacred scriptures which spread knowledge.[1] In a wider sense it denotes any expanded literature which deals with any department of study either in a theoretical or in a practical manner.[2] Many scholars had tried to define and describe the term *Tantra* but according to Harprasad Shastri," each and everyone of their descriptions are incomplete and insufficient." He says ," the word is very loosely used. Ordinary people understand by it any system other than Vedas. But it really means the worship of *Śakti* or female energy. The female energy is worshipped in conjunction with male energy. Thereof male and female is the essence of *Tantra.*[3]

Same is the case with respect to its origin. It is not possible to trace the date of origin of the *Tantra.* It is very difficult to determine where and under what circumstances the word *Tantra* came to be employed in the sense in which it is used in this literature, nor it is possible to trace the origin of the *Tantra* or of the people who first introduced them. There are difference of opinions of the scholars. It is possible to quotes them all, but the view of the greatest pioneer of the Buddhist *Tantra* and Iconographical studies Dr. Binoytosh Bhattacharyya

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Journal of the Oriental Institute, Vol. 60, Nos. 3-4, March-June 2011 Issue, pp. 53-66.

* Oriental Institute, Near Palace Gate, Palace Road, M. S. Uni. of Baroda, Vadodara-390 001.

1. Quoted by Moharana S. K.,"*Tantric Buddhism*", pub. By Aryan books International, New Delhi 2001, p.1.
2. Dasgupta S. B., "*Tantric Buddhism,*" Calcutta University, 1974, p.2.
3. MM Shastri Harprasad in his Introduction to N.N. Vasu's "*Modern Buddhism And Its Followers in Orissa*", Calcutta University, P. 1.

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can be taken into account. According to him the *Tantras* and the *Mantras* have been practiced by the Buddhists since the time of Buddha. He says that, "though Buddha was antagonistic to all sorts of sacrifices, necromancy, sorcery or magic, he nevertheless is credited with having given instructions on *Mudrās, Maṇḍalas, Yogas, Dhāraṇī, Tantras* etc., so that prosperity in this world, by virtue of these, could be attained by his less advanced disciples who seemed to care more for this world than for the *Nirvāṇa* preached by him."[4] Here my aim is to throw some light on the Tantric work *Āryavasudhārādhāraṇī mahāvidyā* which is in manuscript form. There are 15 mss. in the valuable treasure of the Oriental Institute, M.S. University of Baroda , Vadodara. Out of these 15 mss. only 4 are studied and made use of here for this article.

In the Buddhist Literature few words deserve special attention to understand. Among these words, *Dhāraṇī,Mantra,Maṇḍala, Mudrā* words are the most important and interesting to know. In the work *Āryavasudhārāmahāvidyā*, the two words viz. *Dhāraṇī* and *Vasudhārā* are worthy to be known. The word *Dhāraṇī* is explained by S. B. Dasgupta. as *dhāryate anayā iti* i.e. by which something is sustained or kept up.[5] The *Dhāraṇī* , the mystical syllables are capable of keeping up a man's religious life. The *Dhāraṇīs* are the unmeaning string of words, which are said to confer great merit when muttered repeatedly. The *Mantra, Dhāraṇī, Mudrā, Maṇḍala* etc. are said to be instructed by Buddha himself to the people to obtain prosperity in the world. In the *Sādhanamālā*, a collection of 312 short works on *sādhanā*, *Sugata Tathāgata* is mentioned as the originator of the several powerful *Mantras* and *Dhāraṇīs*.[6]

In *Āryavasudhārādhāraṇīmahāvidyā* also we found that *Sugata Tathāgata* is preaching *Vidyā* to Vajradharasagara and Sucaṇḍa Gṛhapati. A famous logician Śāntarakṣita and his disciple Kamalaśīla are of the opinion that Buddha himself instructed the people in *Dhāraṇī, Mudrā* etc. so that they might obtain prosperity in this world. It is said that less advanced or ordinary followers of Buddhism could not follow the original aphorism of Buddhism and for

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4. Bhattacharyya Binoytosh, "*An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*" pub. by Motilal Banarsidass, 1980, p.48 and "*Sādhanamālā* ", GOS No. XLI, pub. by Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1928, Vol. II, Introduction, p.XVII

5. Dasgupta S. B., *op. cit.* p. 56.

6. *Sādhanamālā*, ed. By Bhattacharyya B., Vol. I, *Prajñādisādhanamidam sugatopadiṣṭam I svāhāntaḥ kathitaḥ sa eṣa sugatairmantraḥ kavitvādibhūḥ* P.334/335

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them it was felt necessary to abridge the *Sūtras* into *Dhāraṇīs*. Hence H. Kern says that, '*Dhāraṇīs* existed in Buddhism from very ancient time and seemed to have been introduced into Buddhism for the benefit of the less advanced followers who did not care so much for *Nirvāṇa* as they did for their material prosperity in this world.'[7] The *Dhāraṇīs* which are regarded as carrying great potency are composed of a string of syllables which bear no meaning etymologically. In *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Vasuvandhu declares that the unmeaningness of the *Mantras* is their real significance which is to be realized by the *sādhaka* through concentration only. These *Mantras* are considered to be more powerful. By muttering repeatedly the *Dhāraṇīs*, one can confer to the Buddhahood.

Vasudhārā is one of the *śaktis* of the *Dhyānī Buddha*. There are five *Dhyānī Buddhas* – Vairocana, Ratnasambhava, Amitābha, Amoghasiddhi and Akṣobhya. These five *Dhyānī Buddhas* came next to *Ādi Buddha*. The *Dhyānī Buddhas* are known as the progenitors of five *Kulas viz. dveṣa*(hatred), *moha*(delusion), *rāga* (attachment), *cintāmaṇi* (willingness) and *samaya* (convention) which are helpful in attaining desires and emancipations. These *Dhyānī Buddhas* have each a spiritual consort and spiritual sons. These spiritual consorts are known as their *śakti* and spiritual sons as their Boddhisattvas.

Vasudhārā is the consort of Jambhala, the Buddhist God of wealth. Jambhala is an emanation of the *Dhyānī Buddha* Ratnasambhava, the jewel-born and therefore is treated as the God of wealth and plenty. *Vasudhārā* is the goddess of plenty and is worshipped for various boons. She is fully decked with ornaments and is invariably accompanied by her confidants. Her complexion is always yellow like the colours of Ratnasambhava. She carries in Her left hand ears of corn placed in a vessel which showers gems, while the right hand exhibits the *varadamudrā*. *Vasudhārā* is very popular with the Hindus, who worship her widely and there are many Hindu *Tantric* works in which *Vasudhārā* is inculcated. The popularity of the goddess is shown by the attribution of no less than four *sādhanās* (213—216) to Her worship, in the *sādhanamālā* edited by Dr. Binoytosh Bhattacaryya.

Āryavasudhārādhāraṇīmahāvidyā ia a work of Buddhist *Tantra*. This *Vasudhārā-dhāraṇīmahāvidyā* is meant for those who are desirous of getting health, wealth and plenty.

Description of the Manuscript :—

(A) (1) Title of the ms. :-*Āryavasudhārāmahāvidyā*

(2) Accession No. :- 10488

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7. Kern H., '*Manual of Indian Buddhism*', New Delhi, 1974, p.6.

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(3) Folios :- 5

(4) *Granthas* :- 120

(5) Language :- Sanskrit

(6) Script :- *Devanāgarī*

(7) Subject :- *Buddhatantra*

(8) Size :-20.5x 7.5 cm.

(9) Side margin :- 2.5x2.5cm.

(10) Upper –Lower margin :- 1.5x1.5 cm.

(11) Lines per page :- 13

(12) Letters per line :-45 to 50

(13) Date of writing :- sam.1755,A.D. 1699

(14) Place of writing :- Aurangabad

(15) Name of the scribe :-Ṛṣi Dīpacanda

The condition of the Manuscript is good Handwritings are also very fine. Punctuation marks are not found everywhere. There are few scribal errors. Yellow ink is used to erase the letters and corrections are made in margin. The number 2 is used for the repetition of the words. Generally ष is used for ख e. g. सुषाय for सुखाय.

The post colophon entry runs as संवत् १७५५ वर्षे लिख्यतं ऋषि दीपचंद श्रीनुरंगाबादमध्ये। शुभं भवतु श्रेयः।।श्री।। The beginning of the ms. ।।८०।। श्रीगणेशाय नमः।। ऐं नमः।।

(B) (1) Title of the ms. :-*Āryavasudhārāmahāvidyā*

(2)Accession No. :- 14531

(3) Folios :- 5 (F.No. 4 is missing)

(4) *Granthas* :- 120

(5) Language :- Sanskrit

(6) Script :- *Devanāgarī*

(7) Subject :- *Buddhatantra*

(8) Size :-19.5 x 8.5 cm.

(9) Side margin :- 1.8 x 1.8 cm.

(10) Upper –Lower margin :- 1 x 1 cm.

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(11) Lines per page :- 15

(12) Letters per line :-40

(13) Date of writing :- sam.1764,A.D.1708

(14) Place of writing :- Stambhatīrtha (Khambhat)

(15) Name of the scribe :- Amṛtaśīlā

(16) Source :- Yati Śrī Hemacandrajī, Vadodara

The condition of the ms. is good, handwritings are very nice. Punctuation marks are not done everywhere. Somewhere double *daṇḍas* are used for full point. There are few scribal errors. Black ink is used to erase the letter and corrections are done in the margin. Number 2 is used for the repetition of the word. The post colophon entry runs as शुभं भूयात्। श्रीरस्तु: श्री:।। संवत् इन्दुऋषिषट्वेदवर्षे आषाढ वदि ६ बुधे: पं. श्री. उत्तमशीलगणित तू शिष्य पं.श्री लावण्यशीलगणित तू भातृ अमृतशीलेन लषीकृतं। श्री स्तंभतीर्थे लषीकृतं। श्री नेमजिन प्रसादात्। दीर्घायु भवतु। कल्याणमस्तु।।

The beginning of the ms. ।।८०।। श्रीसद्गुरुपादारविंदेभ्यो नम:।।

(C) (1) Title of the ms. :- *Vasudhārānāma Dhāraṇī*

(2)Accession No. :- 1043

(3) Folios :- 7

(4) *Granthas* :- 160

(5) Language :- Sanskrit

(6) Script :- *Devanāgarī*

(7) Subject :- *Buddhatantra*

(8) Size :-26.5 x 11.5 cm.

(9) Side margin :- 2.5 x2.5 cm.

(10) Upper – Lower margin :- 1. 5x 1. 5 cm.

(11) Lines per page :- 11

(12) Letters per line :-35

(13) Date of writing :- ——

(14) Place of writing :- ——

(15) Name of the scribe :- ——

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The condition of the ms. is very good, handwritings are very fine. Punctuation marks are not done at some places. There are no scribal errors but some corrections in the form of insertion are done in the margin. Number 2 is used for the repetition of the word. At the end of the ms. The *Āmnāya* of *Vasudhārā* is given. At some places *pṛṣṭhamātrā* is used.

(D) (1) Title of the ms. :- *Vasudhārā Dhāraṇī*

(2)Accession No. :- 3998

(3) Folios :- 7

(4) *Granthas* :- 182

(5) Language :- Sanskrit

(6) Script :- *Devanāgarī*

(7) Subject :- *Buddhatantra*

(8) Size :-22.5 x 10 cm.

(9) Side margin :- 3 x 3 cm.

(10) Upper –Lower margin :- 2. 5 x 2. 5 cm.

(11) Lines per page :- 13

(12) Letters per line :-33

(13) Date of writing :- sam.1939, A.D. 1883

(14) Place of writing : - Aṇahilapurapāṭaṇa

(15) Name of the scribe :- Nārāyaṇa Bhāratī Gosāī

The condition of the ms. is very good, handwritings are very fine. Somewhere *daṇḍa* is used. At the same time *pṛṣṭhamātrā* is also used at some places. There are few marginal corrections. In this ms. the performance of the *vidhi* of the *Vasudhārāmahāvidyā* is given. The scribe of the ms. Nārāyaṇa Bhāratī was the knower of Sanskrit. In the post colophon entry, he adds three stanzas in three different metres. One is in praise of Shree Sayajirao Gaekwad in *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* metre, second is for himself in *Upagīti* metre and third is for showing the date of writing and place of the ms. in *Anuṣṭup* metre. They are as follow :—

अस्ति श्रीवटपत्तने क्षितिपतिः श्रीमान् मनीषीवती
कर्तुं पुस्तकसंग्रहं यतरतिर्ग्रंथालये वै निजे।

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भर्त्रा गुर्जरनिर्वृतोऽखिलकलाविद्यादिरक्तः सदा
ख्यातो यश्च सियाजीराव वसुधाधीपो गुणैरुज्वलैः।।१।।
तच्छिष्यो गोसाई यशवन्तभारतीशिष्यः।
नारायणपदपूर्वो भारतीकोविदप्रसंगी।।२।।

अंकाग्न्यंकनिशानाथसंरब्धेषु हायनेषु च
गतेषु विक्रमानन्दविजयाभिधवत्सरे ।।३।।
शुक्लमासेऽसिते पक्षे नवम्यां भृगुवासरे
पत्तने सोऽणहिल्लिख्ये ग्रंथमेतल्लिखितम्।।४।।

Summary of the work:—

Once upon a time, Tathāgata Buddha was on journey in the Kosambi city, associated with the monks. He was preaching *Dharma* to the people in the village Ghosilagrāma near Kaṇṭaka forest. Sucaṇḍa Gṛhapati was staying in Kosāmbī. He was very poor. He was desirous of getting many sons, servants, big family, health, wealth and prosperity, huge collection of jewels, pearls, diamonds etc. He approached the Lord Buddha and asked him questions about his poverty. He asked Lord Buddha to preach him such a teaching so that he can become wealthy, healthy, his granary should be prosperous, he should be possessed of abundant jewels, pearls, diamonds, he should be well famous and his family should be prosperous with many family members and servants. Then Buddha told him that before many years, he preached *Vasudhārānāma dhāraṇīvidyā* to Vajradharasāgara Nirghoṣa.He heard this *vidyā*, accepted it, read it, made popular and expanded it. Now I will tell you that *Dhāraṇī* so that you will get all things which you desire. The Lord explained him in details the whole performance of the *Dhāraṇīvidyā*. Then Sucaṇḍa with devoted mind started the *vidhi* of *Dhāraṇīvidyā*. Having performed it completely, he again approached the Lord, bowed down to him and told the Lord that he has fully read, accepted, propagated and explained it to others. From that very moment Sucaṇḍa Gṛhapati acquired all his requirements. Then Lord asked his another devotee Ānanda to go to Sucaṇḍa's house to see his treasure of wealth, jewels, pearls and granary. Then Ānanda went to Sucaṇḍa's house and saw all his prosperity, wealth, granary etc., then he again approached Lord and asked him, "who is Lord Heruka? Due to whose grace Sucaṇḍa becomes prosperous. Then Lord told Ānanda

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that Sucaṇḍa has performed the *Āryavasudhārādhāraṇīmahāvidyā* with full faith and devoted mind. So also he should perform this *Dhāraṇīmahāvidyā* with full faith. Due to this *Vidyā* he would get all these treasures. One who performs this *Vidyā*, does not attain any misery, diseases and gradually his wealth enriches. Then Ānanda also performed this *Āryavasudhārāmahāvidyā* and as a result acquired everything which he wished .In this way, here ends the *Vasudhārāmahāvidyā*.

At the end of this work the procedure of performing the *Vidyā* is given as- one who wishes to perform this wealth giving *Vidyā*, he should first besmear a room with the cow dung. Then he should make four circles in four quarters and make one circle in the middle. Then he should seat having purified his bodyly parts facing North direction. Then he should read this *Vasudhārā* with full concentration everyday. At the end he will enjoy all health, wealth and prosperity.

Thus the *Dhāraṇīs* are the abridged form of the *Sūtra*s and again these *Dhāraṇīs* were reduced and they gave rise to *Mantra*. The *Dhāraṇīs* are considered to be most sacred. In *Vasudhārādhāraṇī Mantras*, *Bījas* and *Hṛdaya* etc., are also found. These *Mantras* are composed of usually in ordinary prose but occasionally in an enigmatic language. The meaning of which sometimes becomes very difficult to understand. For e.g. at one place the unmeaning string of the words are running as *uttare, anuttare, aṅkure, maṅkure, ukkure, pramaṅkure, rarame, ririme, rurume, dhakhame, khikhime....tatare, ture, ture, tātara,....tāraya...ukke, bukke, tukke, dukke*, etc., At another place- *Sarva mantra padāni tadyatha suṭa suṭa, khaṭa khaṭa, khiṭi khīṭi, khuṭa khuṭa, khura khura,....*etc., are found.

It is said that these *Mantra*s are considered to be more powerful only when they are applied strictly in accordance with the rules. Moreover one should not doubt the efficacy of the *Mantra*s. The recitation of the *Mantra*s should be done with great care. In *Sādhanamālā* the directions of the proper recitation is given as, they should not be recited too quickly nor too slowly. The mind at the time of recitation should be free from all bad thoughts and completely concentrated on the letters of the *Mantra*s which should be repeated so long as there is no tired feeling. [8]

8. Bhattacharyya Binoytosh, "*Sādhanamālā*", (1925), Part-I, p.10.

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Text of the work :—

आर्यवसुधाराधारणीमहाविद्या

।।६०।। श्रीगणेशाय नमः[1] ।। ऐं नमः ।।

संसारहयदैन्यस्य प्रतिहन्तृदिवावहे ।
वसुधारे सुधाधारे नमस्तुभ्यं कृपामहे ।।

एवं मया श्रुतमेकस्मिन् समये भगवान् कोशाम्ब्यां महानगर्यां विहरति स्म। कण्टकसंज्ञके महावनवरे घोसिलारामे महाभिक्षुसङ्घेन सार्धं पञ्चमात्रैर्भिक्षुशतैः संचरबहुलैश्च[2] तपोधनैः[3] बोधिसत्त्वैः सर्वशुद्धधर्मगुणसमनुगतैः[4] परिवृतः पुरस्कृतो धर्म्मं देशयति स्म । तेन खलु पुनः समयेन कौशाम्ब्यां महानगर्यां सुचण्डो नाम गृहपतिः प्रतिवसति स्म । उपशान्तेन्द्रिय उपशान्तमना[5] बहुयोष्यो[6] बहुपुत्रो बहुदुहित्रको बहुभृत्यपरिजनसम्पन्नः श्राद्धो महाश्राद्धः कल्याणाशयसमयेन[7] भगवांस्तेनोपक्रान्त उपसंक्रम्य भगवतः पादौ शिरसाभिवन्द्य भगवन्तं गृहपतेर्दरिद्रतायाः प्रश्नं परिपृच्छति। अथ सुचण्डो गृहपतिर्भगवन्तमेतदवोचत् । दरिद्रोऽहं भगवान् दरिद्रोऽहं सुगत[8] बहुयोष्यो[9] बहुभृत्यपरिजनसम्पन्नश्च[10] तद्देशयतु[11] । भगवन् तादृशं धर्म्मपर्यायं येन दरिद्राः सत्त्वा[12] अदरिद्रा[13] भवेयुः । व्याधिताश्च सत्त्वा[14] अव्याधिता भवेयुः । बहुधनधान्यकोशकोष्टागारसम्पन्नाश्च भवेयुः । प्रिया[15] अमनोज्ञाश्च[16] मनोज्ञाः संदर्शनीयाश्च भवेयुः । दानपतयो महादानपतयश्च अक्षीण[17]हिरण्यसुवर्णधनधान्यरत्नकोशकोष्टागाराश्च भवेयुः। मणिमुक्तावैडूर्यशङ्खशिलाप्रवालजातरूपा रजतसमृद्धाश्च भवेयुः। सुप्रतिष्ठितसुसमृद्धिगृहपुत्रदारकुटुम्बाश्च[18] भवेयुः एवमुक्तं[19] च भगवान् सुचण्डं गृहपतिमेतदवोचत्[20] । अस्ति गृहपते नैकशतसहस्रकृत्य प्रदक्षिणीकृत्यैकान्ते न्यषीदत् । एकान्ते निषण्णश्च श्रीसुचण्डो गृहपतिर्लब्धावसरो भगवन्तमेतदवोचत् । पृष्टेयमहं भगवन्तं तथागतमर्हतं सम्यक् संबुद्धम्[21] । किञ्चित् प्रदेशं[22] स चेन्मे भगवानेकासं[23] कुर्यात्, पृष्टप्रश्नव्याकरणाय । एवमुक्तो भगवान् सुचण्डनामगृहपतिमेतदवोचत् । पृष्टं त्वं गृहपते यद्यदेवाकाङ्क्षसि[24], अहं ते यथापृष्टप्रश्नव्याकरणाय चित्तमाराधयिष्ये[25]। एवमुक्ते सुचण्डो गृहपतिः साधु भगवन्निति कृत्वा भगवतः प्रतिश्रुत्य भगवन्तमेतदवोचत् । कथं[26] पुत्रो वा कुलदुहितो वा भगवन् दरिद्रो भूत्वा अदरिद्रो भवति, व्याधितश्च भूत्वा अव्याधितो भवति । अथ खलु भगवान् जानन्नेव सुचण्ड-गृहपतिमेतदवोचत् । किमतीत्वेष्व[27]क्षय्यसङ्ख्येयेषु[28] कल्पेष्वतीतेषु प्रमाणेषु यदासीत्, तेन कालेन[29] समयेन[30]

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1. B श्रीसद्गुरुपादारवन्देभ्यो नमः; C श्री शारदायै नमः । 2. C बहुलेश्च । 3. C तपोधने । 4. C- समनुगते । 5. C उपशांतमानस । 6. AB बहुपुष्पो; C बहुपोषो । 7. B sup. lin. 8. C सुत । 9. ins. बहुदुहित्रकोः। 10. D बहुमृत्यो तद्देशयतु । 11. C दर्शयतु । 12. C दरिद्राः सर्वे । 13. B in marg. 14. C सर्वे । 15. D प्रियोमनघ्यायश्च । 16. C अमनापश्च । 17. D अक्षीण्य। 18. D कुटुम्बादि समृद्धाश्च । 19. C उक्ते । 20. C om. from गृहपति upto निषण्णश्च । 21. C संबुद्धि । 22. B प्रदेशो; C प्रदेना । 23. C भगवानवकाशं । 24. B आकांक्षी ; D आकांक्षती । 25. C आराधयिष्यति । 26. D ins. after कथं भगवान् कुल। 27. B तेषु; D त्वं । 28. D om. क्षय्य संख्येयेषु कल्पेष्वतीतेषु । 29. C ins. तेन after कालेन । 30. C ins. भगवान् after समयेन ।

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वज्रसागरनिर्घोषो नाम तथागतोऽर्हन् सम्यक् संबुद्धो लोक उत्पातादिविद्याधारणसंपन्नो लोकविदनुत्तरः[1] पुरुषादन्यसारथिः शास्ता देवानाञ्च मनुष्याणां च बुद्धो[2] भगवान् तस्य तथागतस्यान्तिकान्मया गृहपते इयं वसुधारानामधारणी श्रुता[3] श्रुत्वा चोद्गृहीता धारिता वाचिता पर्याप्ता प्रवर्तिता प्रश्नीकृता, अनुमोदिता परेभ्यश्च विस्तरेण संप्रकाशिता । अहमेप्येतां तर्हि गृहपते त्वां धारणीं भाषिष्ये, यथा अस्या धारिण्याः प्रभावेन कुलपुत्रं मानुषान् विहेवयन्ति। अमानुषान्[4] विहेवयन्ति । यक्षान् विहेवयन्ति । राक्षसान् विहेवयन्ति । प्रेतान् विहेवयन्ति । पिशाचान् विहेवयन्ति । भूतान् विहेवयन्ति । कुष्माण्डान् विहेवयन्ति । पूतनान् विहेवयन्ति । स्कन्दान् विहेवयन्ति । अपस्मारान् विहेवयन्ति । ऊस्तान् विहेवयन्ति । पूतनान्[5] विहेवयन्ति । रुधिराहारा[6] विष्ठाहारा मांसाहारा श्लेष्माहारा[7] पूयाहारा सिंहाणकाहारा खेलाहारा मेदाहारा मज्जाहारा जाताहारा जीविताहारा बल्याहारा[8] यावदुत्तिष्ठोत्तिष्ठाहारान् विहेवयन्ति । यस्य चेयं गृहपते धारणी श्राद्धस्य कुलपुत्रस्य वा कुलदुहितुर्वा हृदयगता हस्तगता पुस्तकगता श्रुतिमात्रगता प्रवर्तिता प्रश्नीकृता विचिन्तिता धारिता वाचिता लिषिता अनुमोदिता परेभ्यश्च संप्रकाशिता भविष्यति, तस्य कुलपुत्रस्य वा कुलदुहितुर्वा दीर्घरात्रमर्थाय सुखाय हिताय क्षेमाय सुभिक्षाय योगसंभवाय[9] भविष्यति । यश्चैमां वसुधारा नाम धारणी तथागतेभ्यो सम्यक् संबुद्धेभ्यो महतीमुदारं पूजां कृत्वा नमस्कृत्वा अर्चयेत् अर्धरात्रौ चतुर्वारान्[10]। तस्य देवता आत्तनमस्कारा प्रमुदिता प्रीतिसौमनस्यजाता, स्वयमेवागत्य धनधान्यहिरण्यसुवर्णरत्नदृष्टि[11] पातयिष्यते । प्रीतास्तथागतशासने प्रीताबुद्धिप्रज्ञप्ता प्रीताधर्मप्रज्ञप्ता प्रीतासंघप्रज्ञाता[12] प्रीताममधर्मभाण कस्यातिसये न च नमो रत्नत्रयाय ॐ नमो भगवते वज्रधरसागरनिर्घोषाय तथागताय अर्हते सम्यक्संबुद्धाय तद्यथा ॐ श्री सुरूपे सुवदने भद्रे सुभद्रे भद्रवति मङ्गले सुमङ्गलवति अग्रले अग्रलवति । चन्द्रे चन्द्रवति अले अचले अचपले उद्योतनि उद्यातनि उद्भेदनि उच्छेदनि उदघातिनि शिष्यवति धनवति धान्यवति उद्योतवति । श्रीमति प्रभवति अमले विमले निर्मले रुरुमे सुरूपे विमले अर्चयन्ते । अतनस्ते वितनस्ते अनुनस्ते अवनतहस्ते विश्वकेशि विश्वनिशि विश्वरूपिणि विश्वनखि विश्वशिरे विशुद्धशीले विगूहनीये उत्तरे अनुत्तरे अङ्कुरे मङ्कुरे नङ्कुरे प्रभङ्कुरे[13] ररमे रिरिमे रुरुमे खूखमे खिखिमे खुखुमि विधमे विधिमे क्रक्रमे ततरे (२) तुरे (२) ततर (२) तारय (२) मां सर्वसत्त्वांश्च वज्रे (२) वज्रगर्भे वज्रोपमे वज्रिणि वज्रवति उक्के बुक्के तुक्के दुक्के वक्के धक्के टक्के वरक्के आवर्तनि प्रवर्तनी निवर्तनि निवर्षणि प्रवर्षणि वर्धनि प्रवर्धनि निष्पादनि वज्रधरसागरनिर्घोषं तथागतं अनुस्मर (२) तथागतं सत्वरं[14] अनुस्मर संघसत्यमनुस्मर [15]अनिहारिततपा (२) रूढ (२) पूर (२) पूरय (२) भगवति वसुधारे मम सपरिवारस्य सर्वेषां सत्त्वानां च भर भरं भरणि भरणि शान्तमति जयमति महामति सुमङ्गलमति पिङ्गलमति सुभद्रमति शुभमति चन्द्रमति आगच्छ (२) समयमनुस्मर स्वाहा । आधारमनुस्मर स्वाहा आवरणमनुस्मर[16] स्वाहा । प्रभावमनुस्मर स्वाहा । हृदयमनुस्मर स्वाहा । उपहृदयमनुस्मर स्वाहा । जयमनुस्मर[17] स्वाहा । विजयमनुस्मर स्वाहा । सर्वसत्त्वविजयमनुस्मर[18] स्वाहा । सर्वतथागतविजयमनुस्मर स्वाहा । ॐ श्रीं वसुमुखि[19] स्वाहा । ॐ[20] श्रीं वसुश्रिये स्वाहा । ॐ वसुश्रिये स्वाहा । ॐ वसुमति स्वाहा । ॐ सुमतिश्रिये स्वाहा । ॐ वस्वे स्वाहा । ॐ [21]वसुदेव्यै स्वाहा । ॐ [22]धरणिधारणी स्वाहा । [23]ॐ समये सौम्ये समयङ्करि

1. D - विदनुता । 2. D बुद्धये । 3. D ins. after श्रुता – तस्याहं विधिः प्रथमं स्नानं कृत्वा । 4. C om. अमानुषान् विहेवयति । 5. B प्रेतनान; C प्रेतान । 6. C. ins. before रुधिराहारा–कटिपुतान् विहेवयंति यातुधानान विहेवयेति मूत्राहारान् विहवेयंति । 7. C om. from श्लेष्माहारा upto जीविताहारा । 8. ins. माल्याहारा after बल्याहारा । 9. D योगसंभाराय । 10. A अर्धरात्रेश्चतुर्वीरान् । 11. C –रत्नवृद्धि पातयिष्यंति । 12. B सिंधप्रज्ञप्त्या C ग्रन्थ– । 13. C प्रभंकरे । 14. B स्यत्य; C सत्त्वं; D सत्यं । 15. D अजिराहारितपा । 16. C आकाश;– D आकार । 17. C. ins. before जय–: स्वभावमनुस्मर स्वाहा धृतिमनुस्मर स्वाहा । 18. B sup. lin. 19. B वसुश्रियै; C वसुमति । 20. C. om. ॐ श्री वसुश्रिये स्वाहा । 21. C वसुधरि । 22. D ins. स्वाहा after धरणि । 23. C समय सौम्ये समयंकरे स्वाहा ।

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महासमये स्वाहा । ॐ श्रिये स्वाहा । ॐ श्रीकरि स्वाहा । ॐ धनकरि स्वाहा । ॐ धान्यकरि स्वाहा । मूलमन्त्रम् - ॐ श्रिये श्रीकरि धनकरि धान्यकरि रत्नवर्षिणि स्वाहा । साध्यमन्त्रम्- ॐ वसुधारे स्वाहा । हृदयं- ॐ लक्ष्म्यै स्वाहा । उपहृदयं-ॐ लक्ष्मीभूतलनिवासनीये स्वाहा । सं यथेदं ॐ पानपात्रवहे स्वाहा । मा पूरगामिनी अनुत्पन्नानां द्रव्याणामुत्पादिनि उत्पन्नानां द्रव्याणां वृद्धिङ्करि । ॐ टिलि (२) टेलि (२) पूत (२) आगच्छ (२) भगवति मा विलम्ब । मनोरथं मे परिपूरय । दशभ्यो दिग्भ्यो पयोदकधाराः[1] परिपूरयति महीं यथा तमांसि भास्करो रश्मिना विधायते चिरन्तनानि यथा शशी शीतांशुना निष्पादत्यौषधीः इन्द्रो वैवश्वतश्चैव वरुणो धनदो यथा मनोनुगामिनीं रिद्धिं चिन्तयति सदा नृणां तथैमानि यथाकामं चित्ते[2] तु सततं मम प्रयत्नं तु प्रसिध्यं तु सर्वमन्त्रपदानीह तद्यथा सुटसुट खट (२) खिटि (२) खुट (२) खुर (२) मुञ्च ((२) तर्पणि (२) तर्जनि (२) देहि (२) दापय (२) उत्तिष्ठ (२) हिरण्यं सुवर्णं प्रदापय स्वाहा । अन्नपानाय स्वाहा । वसुनिपानाय[3] स्वाहा। गौः स्वाहा । सुरभये स्वाहा। वसुपतये स्वाहा । इन्द्राय स्वाहा[4] । वरुणाय स्वाहा । वैश्रवणाय स्वाहा । दिग्भ्यो विदिग्भ्यः स्वाहा । उत्पादयन्तु मे काङ्क्षाविरहम् । अनुमोदयतु इमे पादाः । ॐ हुं हीं एहि एहि भगवति ददये स्वाहा । एतत् भगवत्या आर्यवसुधाराया हृदयम् । महापापकारिणोऽपि सिध्यन्ति । पुरुष (२) प्रमाणांश्च भोगान् ददाति । ईप्सितं मनोरथं परिपूरयति । सर्वकामान् दुहान् यान् कामान् कामयन्ति तांस्तानीप्सितान् परिपूरयति ।

।। मूलविद्या ।। नमो रत्नत्रयाय नमो देवि धनददुहिते[5] वसुधारे धनधारां पातय (२) कुरु (२) धनेश्वरि धनदे रत्नदे हेमधनधान्यरत्नसागरमहानिधाने । कोटिशतसहस्रपरिवृते । एहि एहि भगवति प्रविश्य मत्पुरं मद्भुवने महाधनधान्यधारां पातय कुरु (२) ॐ हुं त्रट कैलासवासनीये[6] स्वाहा ।। महाविद्या ।। ॐ वसुधारे महावृष्टिनिपातिनि वसु स्वाहा ।। मूलहृदयम् ।। ॐ वसुधारे सर्वार्थसाधने साधय (२) तु धारय (२) रक्ष (२) सर्वार्थनिधियन्त्रम् । वव टट (२) वटट दरु स्वाहा । परमहृदयं ॐ नमो भगवति आर्यले वमिके यथा संजीवरक्षणि फलहस्ति दिव्यरूपे धनदे वरदे शुद्धविशुद्धे शिवङ्करि शान्तिकरि भयनाशिनि भयदूषणि सर्वान् दुष्टान् भञ्जय (२) मोहय (२) जम्भय (२) स्तम्भय (२) मम शान्तिं पुष्टिं वश्यं रक्षां च कुरु (२) स्वाहा । [7]अर्हतां सम्यक् संबुद्धानां पूजां कृत्वा षण्मासानां वर्तयेत् । ततः सिद्धा भवति । यस्मिंश्च स्थाने इयं महाविद्या वाच्यते सा दिक् पूज्यमाना भवति । पौष्टिकार्थं[8] स्वगृहे परगृहे वा भगवतस्तथागतस्यावलोकितेश्वरस्य मन्त्रदेवतायाश्चाग्रतः सर्वबुद्धबोधिसत्त्वेभ्यो नमस्कृत्वा शुभे स्थाने कोशकोष्ठागारे वा चन्दनेन चतुरस्रं मण्डलं कृत्वा त्रीन् वारान् आवर्तयेत् । ततो गृहपते कुलपुत्रस्य वा कुलदुहितुर्वा महापुरुषमात्रया वसुधारया गृहं परिपूरयति । सर्वधनधान्यहिरण्यरत्नसुवर्णैः सर्वोपकरणैश्च सर्वोपद्रवांश्च नाशयति । तेन हि त्वं गृहपते उद्गृह्णीत्वेमां वसुधारा नाम धारणी धारय, वाचय, देशय, उद्गृह्य, पर्यवाप्नुहि, प्रवर्तय, अनुमोदयः परेभ्यश्च विस्तरेण[9] संप्रकाशय तद् भविष्यति । दीर्घरात्रमर्थाय हिताय सुभिक्षाय क्षेमाय सुखाय योगसंभाराय चेति

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1. B पयोदके धाराभिः । 2. B चिंततं; C चिंतिते । 3. B sup. lin. वसुनिपातये । 4. C ins. यमाय स्वाहा after इन्द्राय स्वाहा । 5. D धन अर्हते । 6. D कैलासवासिन्यै । 7. C. ins. before अर्हतां-लेवडिया धारणीयं इयं सा गृहपति इमानि वसुधाराधारणी मंत्रपदानि सर्व तथागतानां । 8. B पौष्टिककार्यार्थं; D पौष्टिककार्यं स्वकार्यं । 9. B missing from ण in विस्तरेण upto भगवन्त on Page No. 64 ।

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साधु भगवदिति सुचण्डो गृहपतिर्भगवतान्तिकादिमां वसुधारां नाम धारणीं श्रुत्वा हृष्टतुष्ट उदग्र आत्तमनाः प्रमुदितः प्रीतिसौमनश्च यातो भगवच्चरणयोर्निपत्य कृतकरपुटो भूत्वा भगवन्तमेतदवोचत् । उद्गृहीता मे भगवन्नियं वसुधारा नाम धारणी प्रश्नीकृता धारिता वाचिता पर्यवाप्ता अनुमोदिता मनसा सुपरिचिन्तिता वा च परेभ्यश्च विस्तरेणेदानीं संप्रकाशयिष्यामीति । अथ तत् क्षणमात्रेण सुचण्डो गृहपतिर्भगवन्तमेकशतसहस्रकृत्वा प्रदक्षिणीकृत्य भगवतः पादौ शिरसाभिवन्द्य भगवन्तमनेकशः पुनः पुनरवलोक्य भगवन्तोऽन्तिकात् प्रक्रान्तः । अथ खलु भगवान् आयुष्मन्तमानन्दमामन्त्रयति स्म । गच्छ त्वमानन्द सुचण्ड गृहपतेरागारं गत्वा च परिपूर्णं पश्य सर्वधनधान्यहिरण्य-रत्नसुवर्णोपकरणैः महाकोशकोष्ठागाराणि परिपूर्णानि । अथ खलु आयुष्मानानन्दो भगवतः प्रतिश्रुत्य येन कोशाम्बी महानगरी, येन सुचण्डो गृहपतेरागारं, तेनोपक्रान्तः उपसंक्रम्याभ्यन्तरं[1] प्रविश्याद्राक्षीद् भगवन्तमेतदवोचत्। को भगवन् हेरुकः प्रत्ययो यस्य येन सुचण्डो गृहपतिर्महाधनो महाभोगो महाकोशकोष्ठागारः सर्वधनधान्यहिरण्यसुवर्णसमृद्धः संवृत्तः । भगवानाह । श्रद्धानन्दः सुचण्डो गृहपतिः परमश्राद्धः कल्याणाशय उद्गृगीता च तेन इयं वसुधारा नाम धारणी धारिता वाचिता देशिता ग्राहीता पर्यवाप्ता प्रश्नीकृता अनुमोदिता । इदानीं परेभ्यश्च विस्तरेण संप्रकाशयिष्यति । तेन आनन्द त्वमपि उद्गृहिष्येमां वसुधारां नाम धारणीं धारय वाचय देशय ग्राहय पर्यवाप्नुहि प्रवर्तय प्रश्नीकुरु अनुमोदय परेभ्यश्च विस्तरेण संप्रकाशय यस्येयं कुलपुत्रस्य कुलदुहितुर्वा हृदयगता हस्तगता गृहगता पुस्तकगता भविष्यति । न तस्य रोगदुर्भिक्षमरककान्तारादयो भविष्यन्ति । क्रमेण विभावास्तस्य प्रवर्धिष्यन्ते तद्भविष्यति । बहुजनहिताय बहुजनसुखाय लोकानुकम्पायै महतो जनकार्यस्यार्थाय सुखाय देवानां मनुष्याणां च नाहं आनन्द तं धर्मे समनुपश्यामि । स देवलोके स नारके लोके स ब्रह्मलोके स श्रमणब्राह्मणिकायां प्रजायां सदेवमानुषासुरायां च इमां वसुधारां नाम धारणीं महाविद्यामन्यथा वै करिष्यतिऽतिक्रमिष्यति नैतत्स्थानं विद्यते । तत् कस्य हेतोर्मन्त्रप्रदा नैवैते क्षीणकुशलमूलानां सत्त्वानां श्रुतिपथमागमिष्यन्ति । कः पुनर्वादो यैः पुस्तकगतामपि कृत्वा गृहे धारयिष्यन्ति । तत् कस्य हेतोः सर्वतथागतानां ह्येतद् वाक्यं सर्वतथागतैरियं धारणी भाषिता अध्यक्षिता स्वमुद्रिया मुद्रिता प्रभाविता प्रकाशिता प्रश्नीकृता अनुमोदिता प्रवर्तिता प्रशस्ता संवर्तिता विवृतोत्तानीकृता आसेचिता स्वाख्याता सुनिर्दिष्टा च सर्वसत्त्वानां दरिद्राणां वा नानाव्याधिपरिमितानां सर्वदुष्टभयोपद्रवाणां चार्थायेति । आनन्द आह – अनुगृहीता मे भगवन्नियं वसुधारा नाम धारणी धारिता वाचिता देशिता ग्राहीता प्रवर्तिता प्रश्नीकृता अनुमोदिता मनसा सुपरिचिन्तिता । अथ खलु आयुष्मान्नानन्द उत्थाय आसनाद् एकान्तमुत्तरासंगलं कृत्वा दक्षिणजानुमण्डलं पृथिव्यां प्रतिष्ठाप्य येन भगवांस्तेनाञ्जलिं प्रणम्य तस्या वेलायां कृतकरपुटो भूत्वा इदमुदानयति स्म । अचिन्त्यो भगवान् बुद्धो बुद्धधर्मेण्य चिंतय अचिन्त्यो हि प्रसन्नानां विपाकश्चाप्यचिन्तय चिन्तय । शास्ता येन हि सर्वज्ञ जरामरणपारगो धर्मराज फलप्राप्तिर्बुद्धवीर नमोऽस्तु ते (२) अथ खलु आयुष्मान्नानन्दो हृष्टतुष्ट उदग्र आत्तमनाः प्रमुदितः प्रीतिसौमनस्यजातो भगवन्तमेतदवोचत्[2] । का नामानन्द भगवान् धर्मपर्याया कश्चेमां धारयति । भगवानाह तेन हि त्वं आनन्द सुचण्डो ग्रहपतिः परिपृच्छता धारय सर्वधनधान्यमित्यपि धारय ।

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1. BD om. : उपसंक्रम्याभ्यान्तरं प्रविश्याद्राक्षी । 2. B resumes from मेतदवोचत् (cf. V. 1. Page No. 63) ।

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सर्वतथागतप्रशस्तरवसुधाराधारणीकल्पमित्यपि धारय । इदमवोचत् भगवान् आत्तमना आयुष्मान्नानन्दस्ते चक्षिक्षुवस्वे च बोधिसत्त्वा सा च सर्वावती पथमभ्यनन्दन्ति । सदेवमानुषासुरगन्धर्वाश्च लोका भगवतो भाषितमभ्यनन्दन्निति[1] । श्री आर्यवसुधारा इयं वसुधारा धनदपुत्री, यत्र गृहे धनादिकं तिष्ठति यच्च मुख्यं तत्र चतुर्दिक्षु गोमयलिप्तानि मण्डलानि कृत्वा तन्मध्ये पञ्चमण्डलं तस्मिन् उपविष्ट उत्तराभिमुखो भूत्वा पवित्रगात्रो वसुधारां नाम धारणीं महाविद्यां वाचयति तद्वाचकः गृहपतिः सुमतिः सावधानतया एकदृष्टिरेकाग्रमनास्तत्र प्रतिदिनं स्वर्णपर्णहितयः स्वकर्णगोचरीकर्त्री अविच्छिन्न-प्रभिन्नभोगमुपभोगं च विधत्ते । इति श्री आर्यवसुधारामहाविद्यासंपूर्णा । शुभं भूयात्[2] ।

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1. C reads colophon- इति श्रीवसुधारा नाम धारणी समाप्ता । शुभं भवतु । कल्याणमस्तु । ; D reads इति संपूर्णम् । In post colophon D reads following three stanzas.

   अस्ति श्रीवटपत्तने क्षितिपतिः श्रीमान् मनीषीवती
   कर्तुं पुस्तकसंग्रहं यतरतिर्ग्रन्थालये वै निजे ।
   भर्त्रा गुर्जरनिवृत्तोऽखिलकलाविद्यादिरक्तः सदा
   ख्यातो यश्च सियाजिराव वसुधाधीपो गुणैरुज्वलैः ।।
   तच्छिष्यो गोसाई यशवंतभारतीशिष्यः ।
   नारायणपदपूर्वो भारतीकोविदप्रसंगी ।।
   अंकाग्न्यंकनिशानाथसंरब्धेषु हायनेषु च ।
   गतेषु विक्रमानंदविजयाभिधवत्सरे ।।
   शुक्लमासेऽसिते पक्षे नवम्यां भृगुवासरे ।
   पत्तनेसोऽणहिल्लिख्ये ग्रंथमेतद्व्यलीलिखत् ।।

2. A reads colophon- B - श्रीरस्तु श्री ।। संवत् इन्दुऋषिषट्वेदवर्षे अषाढवदिः ६ बुधेः पं. श्री उत्तमशीलगणि तत् शिष्य पं. श्री लावण्यशीलगणि तत् भातृ अमृतशीलेन लषीकृतं । श्री स्तंभतीर्थे लषीकृतं । श्री नेमजिनप्रशादात् । दीर्घायुर्भवति । कल्याणमस्तु ।
   श्री संवत् १७५५ वर्षे लिखितम् ऋषि दीपचंद श्री औरंगाबादमध्ये ।। शुभं भवतु श्रेयः ।। श्रीः ।।

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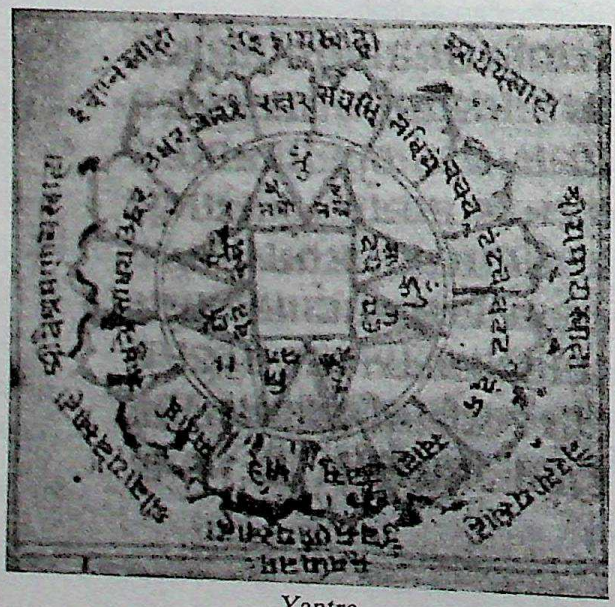
Vasudhārā



Yantra

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CONTRIBUTION OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, MSU, BARODA TO THE BUDDHIST STUDIES**

-M. L. Wadekar*

Introductory:

The Oriental Institute is one of the most famous and important Post-graduate Teaching and Research Institutes of India. The great Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad Maharaja of Baroda conceived the idea of establishing such Institute in 1883 and formally established Oriental Institute also known as *Prācya Vidyāmandira* in 1927. The main objective is to collect our ancient heritage, hidden in the form of Manuscripts, scattered in the houses of scholars, temples, *mathas*, Jain *Derāsaras*, preserve this valuable treasure for the posterity and edit and publish the important works, based upon the Manuscripts. Post-graduate Students especially doing M. Phil. and Ph.D. are given guidance for their research.

The contribution of the Institute to the Buddhist Studies can be presented in three different aspects.

1. Manuscript treasure:

The Oriental Institute of Baroda has at present thirty thousand Manuscripts on diverse subjects, in various Scripts and written on different kinds of material. Among them, there are more than 110 Buddhist Manuscripts, very rare and unique. Some of them are written in Simhali, Burmese, Bengali and Nevari scripts. Some of them are beautifully illustrated and decorated. Some of them are exclusively to be found in this collection. The list of all such Mss. is attached herewith for ready reference.

2. Publication of Critical Editions of very rare books-

In the early days of the Institute, when Dr. Binaytosh Bhattacharyya was the First Director of the Institute (1924-1952). He was a renowned scholar of Buddhism and Buddhist Tantras. During his period, more than 14 books were edited and published in the Gaekwad's Oriental Series, most of which are edited by him. Most of these books are out of stock now and are in

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great demand from the scholarly world. Hence some of them have been repeatedly reprinted by our Institute.

1- and 2- G.O.S. No. 26 and 41 *Sādhanamālā* ed. by B. Bhattacharyya Vol. I 1925, 1968, 2010 Vol. II 1928, 1968, 2011.

The work *Sādhanamālā* as the title itself suggests, is a compilation of several *Sādhanās* or Buddhist Tantric rituals, composed by different authors. It belongs to little known branch *Vajrayāna* of Buddhism. It was edited by the great scholar of Buddhism and First Director of our Institute Dr. Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, on the basis of eight Manuscripts, collected and collated for the said purposes. The *Sādhanās*, not only prescribe rituals for worshipping the deities, but also numerous *Mudrās*. The importance of the work can be understood from the great demand of this book from the scholars world over and its repeated reprints. Both Volumes are recently reprinted.

3- G.O.S. No. 40 *Advayavajrasaṅgrahaḥ* by Advayavajra ed. Haraprasad Shastri 1927

This contains twenty one short works on Buddhism written by *Paṇḍita* and *Avadhūta* named Advayavajra. It is edited by Haraprasad Shastri, in 1927. The twenty one works are: 1 *Kudṛṣṭinirghātanam* –refutation of wrong theory. It contains duties of a person, initiated in Buddhism, 2 *Mūlapattayaḥ* and *sthūlapattayaḥ*- the fourteen radical and eight gross offences against *Vajrayāna*, 3 *Tattvaratnāvalī*–three *Yānas* of Buddhism *Śrāvakayāna* and *Pratyekayāna* (for *Vaibhāṣika* school), while *Mahāyāna* (for *Sautrāntika, Yogācāra* and *Mādhyamika* schools), 4 *Pañcatathāgatamudrāvivaraṇam*-(the explanation of the marks of the five *Tathāgatas*), 5 *Sekanirṇaya* or (the nature of impregnation), 6 *Caturmudrā* (the four *Mudrās* –*Karmamudrā, Dharmamudrā, Mohamudrā* and *Samayamudrā*), 7 *Sekatānvayasaṅgraha* (a collection of the theme of impregnation), 8 *Pañcākāras* (five forms or the five *Tathāgatas*), 9 *Māyānirukti* (The explanation of illusion), 10 *Svapnanirukti* (the explanation of dreams), 11 *Tattvapraveśa* (the exposition of truth), 12 *Apratiṣṭhānaprakāśa* (exposition of the absence of substratum of knowledge), 13 *Yuganaddhaprakāśa* (the nature *Yab-Yum*), 14 *Mahāsukhaprakāśa* (nature of supreme happiness), 15 *Tattvaviṁśikā* (twenty verses on truth), 16 *Mahāyānaviṁśikā* (twenty verses on *Mahāyāna*), 17 *Nirvedhapañcaka* (the five verses on piercing the soul or remorse), 18 *Mahāyānaṣaṭka* (six verses in praise of *Mādhyamika* system of Buddhism), 19 *Premapañcaka* (five verses on Love), 20 *Tattvadaśaka* (ten verses on truth), 21 *Amanasikārādhāra* (That which does not stick the mind).

4- G.O.S. No. 44 *Vajrayānagranthadvayam* ed. B. Bhattacharyya, 1929

The two *Vajrayāna* works namely *Prājñopāyaviniścayasiddhi* of Anaṅgavajra and *Jñānasiddhi* of Indrabhūti are edited by B. Bhattacaryya and are published in 1929. The first

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is in five chapters and the second one in twenty chapters. The first is a shortest work, giving maximum information about *Vajrayāna*. The second deals with a variety of topics connected with *Vajrayāna*.

5- G.O.S. No. 49 *Prācīnabauddhatantragranthāḥ* (Pre-Diṅnāga Buddhist-texts on logic from Chinese Sources) by Giuseppe Tucci, 1930

This book contains Pre-Diṅnāga Buddhist-texts on logic from Chinese Sources. It contains 1 *Tarkaśāstra* with notes and indices, 2 Retranslation into Sanskrit from Chinese of *Upāyahṛdaya*, 3 Tibetan Text and English Translation of *Vigrahavyāvartanī* of Nāgārjuna and 4 *Śataśāstra* of Āryadeva - English Translation. All are edited/translated by Giuseppe Tucci in 1929.

6- G.O.S. No. 53 *Guhyasamājatantram* or *Tathāgataguhyaka*-- ed. B. Bhattacharyya 1931

This is the earliest and the most authoritative work on *Tantra* school of Buddhism of about third century A.D. It was edited by B. Bhattacharyya and first published in 1931 and reprinted in 1967. The work has eighteen *paṭala*s or chapters. It prescribes a process by which emancipation can be obtained in shortest time possible and even in this birth.

7- 10 G.O.S. No. 61 *Śaktisaṅgamatantram* ed. by B. Bhattacharyya Vol. I *Kālīkhaṇḍa*,1932, G.O.S. No. 91 Vol. II, *Tārākhaṇḍa* 1941, G.O.S. No. 104 Vol. III, *Sundarīkhaṇḍa*, 1947, G.O.S. No.166, *Chinnamastākhaṇḍa*, Vol. IV, Ed. by late B. Bhattacharyya and Vraja-vallabh Dwivedi, 1978.

The *Śaktisaṅgamatantra* is in four volumes- *Kālī, Tārā, Sundarī* and *Chinnamastā*. All are edited by B. Bhattacharyya, but the last is completed by Vrajavallabh Dwivedi in 1978. The first part of the *Śaktisaṅgamatantra* called *Kālī-khaṇḍa* was published in 1932 as G.O.S. No. 61: the second called *Tārākhaṇḍa* was published in 1942 as G.O.S. No.91, and the third part *Sundarīkhaṇḍa* was published in 1947 as G.O.S. No.104. In the first part of the Introduction after giving information about the manuscript materials, the Editor has discussed about the topic such as the origin, special feature, date and place of the *Śaktisaṅgama Tantra*, its division etc. In the second part of the introduction, the editor has discussed the principle tenets of *Tantra* as taught in the present edition. After giving a brief outline of the *Śākta* philosophy, he discusses the several *Yoga*s, *Praṇavopāsanā*, place of Guru, *Mantrasiddhi*, *Prāṇāyāma* etc. The fourth part of the *Śaktisaṅgama Tantra*, designated as *Chinnamastā-khaṇḍa*, contains text with detailed introduction in Sanskrit.

11- G.O.S. No. 62 *Abhisamayālaṅkārāloka* of Haribhadra- a commentary on *Prajñāpāramitā*, ed. by Giuseppe Tucci, Vol. I, 1932

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This book contains commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitā* - Buddhist philosophical work, *Abhisamayālaṅkārāloka* of Haribhadra, edited by Giuseppe Tucci.

12- G.O.S. NO. 30 and 31 *Tattvasaṅgrahaḥ* of Śāntirakṣita with com. of Kamalaśīla: (Vol. 2 Sanskrit Text, 1926)

G.O.S. No. 80 and 83 *Tattvasaṅgrahaḥ* of Śāntirakṣita with com. of Kamalaśīla: Translated by Ganganath Jha Vol. I 1937 & Vol. II, 1939 (2 Vols.)

A Buddhist philosophical work of the 8th century, written by Śāntirakṣita with *Pañjikā* by his disciple Kamalaśīla. It is edited by Pandit Ember Krishnmacharya. The work is a collection of different philosophical tenets just like *Prakṛti*; *Īśvara*, *Sabdabrahma* etc. The procedure followed is: the examination of the theory followed by its refutation. In all, there are 26 *Parīkṣās*. The original text is so difficult that without the commentary and translation, it will be almost impossible to comprehend the nature of the work.

This is the second part of the text, containing the discussion of remaining three important topics, namely, *Śrutiparīkṣā*, *Svataḥprāmāṇyaparīkṣā* and *Atīndriyadarśipuruṣaparīkṣā*. It may be noted that this Buddhist philosophical work of 8th century was written by Śāntarakṣita and his disciple Kamalaśīla composed *Pañjikā* commentary. Thus we get to know the tradition of the *Guru* and *Śiṣya*.

13- G.O.S. No. 109 *Nispannayogāvali* of Abhayakaragupta ed. by B. Bhattacharyya, 1949 Sec. ed. 1972

This book contains 26 *Maṇḍala*s or magic circles with full description of more than 600 deities of the Buddhist pantheon. It is composed by Abhayakaragupta of the Vikramaśīla Monastery. It is edited by B. Bhattacharyya in 1949 and reprinted in 1972.

3. Publication of books in Vernaculars:

This section owes its existence to the princely donation of rupees Two Lakhs made by the late Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad in 1912 for publication of popular literature in Gujarati, Marathi and Hindi. The activities of this section may be tabulated as under: Shri Sayaji Sahityamala (For Adults), Shri Sayaji Balajnanamala (for juveniles), Shri Sayaji Gramavikasamala (For rural uplift), Matushri Jamanabai Smaraka Granthamala (For women), Shri Shishujnanamala (For children), The Maharaja Sayajirao Memorial Lecture Series. More than 660 books have been published so far on a variety of topics and the section has well served its purpose of popularizing the knowledge among masses.

In the Sayaji Sahityamala and Balajnanamala also, ten books in Gujarati and Marathi are published, relating to Buddhism, Buddhist Culture and Society.

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1 No.23, No.196 *Dīrghanikāya bhāga* I and II, Prof. Chintamani Rajawade,1918,1931

2 No.101 *Aśoka nā Śilālekho*, Bharatram Bhanusukhram Maheta 1926

3 No.186 *Jātakātila nivaḍaka goṣṭī* - Prof. Chintaman Vinayak Joshi, *Prathamārdha* 1930

4 No. 202 *Bhauddhadharma arthāt Dharmacikitsā*, Ramchandra Narayan Patkar, 1932 (Translation of Mrs. Rhys David's book Buddhism)

5 No. 233 *Bhagavān Buddhacarita vā Dharmasaṅgraha*, Ramarav Martand Bhamburkar, Translation of Kern's Manual of Buddhism 1934

6 NO. 246 *Buddhakālīna Bhāratīya Samāja*, Narayan Govind Kalelkar, 1936

7 Bala No. 36 *Bhauddha Guphāo*, Prof. Chhotalal Balakrishn Purani, 1923

8 Bala No. 66 *Cakravartī Aśoka*, Hariray Bhagvantray Buch, 1926

9 No.89 *Aśoka*, Vishnu Pandurang Nene, 1931

10 Bala No. 106 *Buddha Bhagavananī Vartāo*, C.M. Bhatt and D.N. Murti, 1939 with pictures

11 Bala No. *Śākyamuni Gautama*, Prof. Chintaman Vinayak Joshi, 1935

4. Dr. Binoytosh Bhattacharyya's personal contribution

He not only edited the above mentioned books under Gaekwad's Oriental Series, but also contributed immensely by his more than 200 articles and 14 books, written on the subject of Buddhist Philosophy, *Tantra*, Iconography and different therapies. The most important contribution of this scholar is the publication of his two books.

1 Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism, Bhattacharyya 1980

2 The Indian Buddhist Iconography, Bhattacharyya 1985

His important articles on Buddhist studies are:

1 Identification of a Nalanda Stone Image

2 Buddhist Iconography- Vajradhara Vs. Vajrayāna

3 Identification of an Indian Museum Statuette

4 Four Buddhist Images In the Baroda Museum

5 The date of the Buddha Gan-o-Doha

6 The cult of *Bhūtaḍāmara*

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7 The Buddhist Pantheon and its Classification

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11 Two Metal Images of Hindu-Buddhist composition from the Baroda Museum

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13 The *Dhyani* - Buddha Images in the Baroda Museum

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15 On certain Buddhist Miniatures

16 A Peep into later Buddhism

Thus the Oriental Institute has made significant, outstanding and unparalleled contribution to the Buddhist Studies by editing and publishing rare works, based on Manuscripts of Nepali and Chinese sources.

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* Oriental Institute, The M. S. University of Baroda, Vadodara.

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VEDIC ENTITIES AND IDENTITIES

(Ethno-Archaeology of the Vedic-Period)

By

PRAMOD V. PATHAK

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Identity of *Dāsa* and *Purs* in the *Ṛgveda*

They belong to the region of Seistan in Afghanistan

The *Dāsa* tribe in the *Ṛgveda*

The *Rgveda* text is replete with references to the *Dāsa* and *Dasyu* people. They were the enemies of *Aryans* in the RV lore. They are different from *Asuras* also mentioned in the text. The Supreme God of the Vedic lore, Indra is stated to have destroyed ninety-nine *Purs* of *Dāsas* (RV 1.130, 7.19.5). *Dāsas* were in conflict with *Aryans* and both the terms are clubbed together in many *Rcs* in the RV text (RV 1.103.3, 3.34.9, 7.5.6, etc.). This also hints at the direct conflict between *Aryans* and *Dāsas* rather than mythological stories woven around some natural phenomena. In the later period, the term *Asura* acquired mythical meaning as demon and those were opposed to the pantheon of the Vedic gods. *Dāsas* were the people, tribes and social groups.

Name of the King	Opponent *Dāsa*	RV reference
Abhyāvartin Cāyamāna	*Vṛcivanta*	6.27.5
Ṛjiśvan	*Piprū*	1.51.5
Kutsa	*Śuṣṇa*	1.63.3
Atithigva Divodāsa	*Karañja and Parṇaya*	1.53.8
Atithigva Divodāsa	*Śambara*	1.51.6
Sudāsa	Five *Dāsa* kings	7.18.12

This is further confirmed by the pairs of kings and *Dāsa* leaders in conflict with each other which continued for generations. Some of the King vs. *Dāsa* pairs are given in table.

The *Purs* of *Dāsas* are mentioned many times in the RV text. The *Purs* were not the mythological entities. They were concrete terrestrial, geographical entities. As it has been proposed, the cities of the Indus Culture, Mohenjodaro and Harappa etc. were the *Purs* of the *Dāsa* people. However the layout and the gridiron pattern construction of these cities do not confirm to the description of the *Purs* in the Vedic literature. Based on the geographical and environmental evidence, the present author has proposed the *Purs* were located in the Seistan province of South Afghanistan (Pathak 1997: 80-86 and 1999: 50-70). It is possible to locate exact location of *Purs* in the region from the topology of Seistan in Southeast Afghanistan and further to identify the *Dāsa* people in the RV text. For references to the land, topology and people of Seistan, the present author has referred to an excellent book on

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Seistan by G. P. Tate, who travelled widely in Seistan. During his tour in Seistan, Tate collected evidences on the prehistory of the region and published the data in a four volumes titled 1) *History of Seistan*, 2)*Topography of Seistan*, 3)*Ruins in Seistan* and 4) *People of Seistan*. All these four volumes were published earlier under the title of *SEISTAN* and are reprinted (Tate 1979).

In the first quarter of the twentieth century, A. Stein conducted extensive surface explorations in Afghanistan (Stein 1934). Systematic excavations in 1960s by Casal at Mudigak and in 1970s at Shahr-i Sokhta by Tosi revealed the Indus Culture affinities and the Zoroastrian past of the region (Casal 1961, Lamburg Karlovsky and Tosi 1973). Archaeological investigations and excavations have come to standstill over the last three decades of internal strife. Many archaeological sites have suffered on account of indiscriminate plunder and bombing.

Seistan – Ancient Contacts

Seistan is a delta nourished by the Helmand and other streams namely Farah, *Rud-i-Seistan*, dotted by landlocked basin called *Hāmuns* like *Hāmun–i–Seistan*. The name Seistan is derived from the old name *Śākastāna*. It was named *Śākastāna* because the Central Asian tribe of *Śāka*s invaded the region and occupied it in the early centuries of CE.

Seistan remained part of the Persian Empire for long time. It was under the strong influence of the Zoroastrian religion. The land was dotted with sacred fire temples in the ancient times. Some of these spots remained sacred places for the local population even after conversion to the Mohammedan faith. Tate observed Dakhmas used by the Zoroastrian people for the last rites: "Similarly the remains of Dakhmans or towers of silence are dotted over the land. They are most common on the left bank of the River Helmand and in the vicinity of the ancient city of Ram Shaharistan. Many of these Dakhmas being located on the commanding heights were in later centuries utilized as watchtowers. On these towers beacon fires were lit in order to signal the approach of an enemy." (Tate 1979:192).

Rustom the Great, hero of *Śāha Nāmāha* is said to have been born here. Zoroaster found refuge in Seistan with Vistaspa, father of King Darius the Great. In the BCE times, many Persian kings ruled the land. *Śāha Nāmāha* portrays achievement of the rulers like Keresaspa, mythical Feridun, his son Iraj of the Avestan lore, linking them with the rulers of Seistan.

The site of *Dahān-e-Ghulman* (*golāmān*) in Persian Seistan was discovered in 1960 CE. This site became famous for its monumental remains of Iranian fire worship complex.

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As Scerrato points out, "The singularity of the holy building of *Dahan-e-Ghulman* consists partly in the fact that it is unique among the Iranian religious architecture that we are familiar with, and in fact that it is the earliest archaeological evidence of the worship of three entities or groups of divine entities and of the Indo-Iranian doctrine of three fires" (Scerrato, 1979, Vol. 2:725).

There is close affinity between the Seistan culture and the Vedic and the post Vedic culture. There are three fires namely *Gārhapatya, Āhavanīya* and *Dakṣiṇāgni* located in three fire altars of different shapes in the basic sacrificial ritual of *Darśapūrāṇamāseṣṭī* of the Vedic lore. Soma sacrifice is common to both the Vedic and the Indo-Iranian Culture. In the post Vedic period there was close affinity between the names of the rulers ending in *Aśva* (Sanskrit) and *Aspa* (Zend) both the words meaning a horse. The names Keresaspa, Gustasp and Aspi end in *Aspa* meaning horse. In the post-Vedic times, there are references to several names ending in *Aśva*. These are:

1. *Kṛśāśva* – Name of important God i) Prajāpati, ii) a seer and iii) Son of King Sahadeo of *Diṣṭā* clan,
2. *Bṛhadaśva* – i) Son of King *Śrāvāsta*, ii) a seer who visited Pāṇḍavas when they were in exile (MHB., *Vanaparva*, Chapter 79),
3. *Kuvalāśva* - Son of *Bṛhadaśva* ,
4. *Haryaśva* and *Pṛṣadaśva* – Sons of King *Anaraṇya* belonging to *Ikṣvāku* dynasty,
5. *Dṛḍhāśva, Kapilāśva* and *Candrāśva* – Referred in MHB., *Vanaparva*, Chapter 201-204.

These names show the trend of names ending in *Aśva* continued for centuries after the Vedic age. While these have been discontinued in India, the names like *Keresaspa, Aspi* are still prevalent among Parsees in India.

People of Persia, Mede, Sythian and Arian societies fell victim to Alexander's invasion. Persian Empire was destroyed. In the later period Graeco-Bactrian rulers ruled Seistan. Their coins were found in the region. The nomadic equestrian tribes called Scythians or *Śākas* invaded the region. Their influence is known from the name given to the region as *Śākasthāna*. In later period it became Seistan (Tate 1979:9).

At times Seistan was ruled by the Hindu Shahi dynasties ruling Kabul till 12th century. They resisted Islamic onslaught for centuries. In the 7th century, the district of Kej was subject to the Hindu kings of Sindh and one of them lost his life in a battle with invading

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Satrap of Nimruz. The name of the most prominent river in the region Helmand was known as Hindmend till early 10th centure CE. It is mentioned in the accounts of the writers of the day, namely, Istakhri and Ibn-i-Rusteh around 902 CE (Tate 1979:122). The Jat population in Seistan was also high. Jats are found in large numbers in the States of Harayana, Punjab and Rajastan in India. Contacts of the Seistan region with mainland India go back to the Rigvedic times as outlined below.

Topology of Seistan

Isolation of the Seistan region is also a fact on account of the strip of waterless desert some fifty miles wide, dividing the district of Khash from the fertile district on Helmand around Girishk, Kal-i-bist and Kandahar. To the South and Southwest expanse of the desert or semi-desert tracts interpose between the fertile districts of Bam, Makran and Seistan. To the West, there are the mountainous regions of Kuhistan and Kainat. Because of the geographical situation, Seistan was always isolated to a certain extent from the neighbouring regions and it has resulted in shaping its history and civilization (Tate 1979:110).

Seistan is marked by a series of inland lakes and basins that extend up to Baluchistan in the East and southern Iran in the West. It constitutes a unique geographical unit. The water streams originating in the mountains discharge into these lakes. These lakes are called *Hāmun*. In Seistan *Hāmun-i-Seistan* receives discharge of rivers coming down from the Hindukush mountain ranges. These rivers with very wide and plain catchment areas along the slopes of the great Hindukush Range, drain large tract of country into the *Hāmuns*. Here the climate is favourable. The springs are replenished annually by snow and rains. These rivers in turn fertilize large tract of plain lands. When the rains are sufficient they discharge surplus water in the *Hāmuns*. Depending on the rainfall, these *Hāmuns* are either partially or fully filled.

There are four major *Hāmuns*, i.e. *Hāmun-i-Puza* to the East of Seistan, *Hāmun-i-Sawari* in the Northeast; a *Hāmun* is located in the North of *Koh-i-Khwaja* and the fourth *Hāmun is Darya-i-Singri* (Tate 1979:107). The *Hāmun-i-Saberi* and *Hāmun-i-Puzak* located on the Irano-Afghan border, and *Hāmun-i-Mashkhel* on Irano-Baluchistan border and *Hāmun-i-Lor* in Chagai hills bordering Afghanistan and Baluchistan.

Term *Hāmun* is very common in the Iranian language. It refers to a low-lying area where rivers discharge the scanty flow of water they receive during occasional rains and melting of ice in the summer season. The *Hāmuns* are landlocked sandy basins. These are fairly common in eastern Iran bordering Seistan.

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The RV mentions this type of land as *Samanā* where Indra accomplished the great feat of stabilizing the earth and let the floods rush down in the place (RV 3.30.9). Sāyaṇācārya in his commentary on the RV explained *Samanā* as *Samānā Bhūmi*, i.e. plain, leveled land. Water streams flowing in this land do not move forth to the ocean as it is in the case of other rivers in Sind. Therefore I propose that *Samanā* referred in the *Rc* refers to the landlocked basins, the *Hāmuns* in this region.

Over the millennia, desiccation continued and topology of the region underwent changes. Tate describes the topology of the plateau dotted with *Hāmun* as:

"Long lines of shingly beaches are found at the head of deep bays and gulfs which the ancient lake had eaten into, the gravelly plateau which represents, perhaps, the delta of the Helmand River during geological periods of time. These beaches can now best be seen on the bays that indent the shores of the *Sawari-i-Hāmun* in the process of formation. At present the embouchure of the Farah Rud to the North of the river as channel a beach of shingle has been piled up to the height of fully 10 feet above the present level of water in *Hāmun*.

Beaches of gravel and coarse shingle are overlaid by the alluvial soil in the northern delta and here and there where the latter has been removed by the action of water or by efforts of man, portions of the long buried beaches are exposed to view, and gravel and shingle are found to exist many feet below the alluvial surface.

The water worn stones, so common in the country around *Sar-o-ṭar*, are probably from some ancient beach overlaid by silt, and have been turned up by plough. The succession of those beaches or banks of water worn gravel and shingle prove that there has been at very ancient period a subsidence of waters of the lake as each of these beaches make a shingle. This was apparently followed by the desiccation which has reduced the lake to its present site." (Tate 1979:11)

In *Sar-o-ṭar*, word *Sar* has Sanskrit origin where *Sara* means a lake. Desiccation of these lakes happened on account of the diversion of the water streams.

Bad-I-sad-o-bist winds and soil erosion

There has been another strongly influencing environmental factor in Seistan. There prevail strong gales in the region for almost hundred and twenty days of a year. These blow from June to September every year. These are locally called *Bad-I-sad-o-bist*, literally

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winds of hundred twenty days. The significance of these gales is dealt leter in connection with the nature of the Vedic gods Maruts.

"The Northwest wind is the most formidable and striking feature of the climate of Seistan. In winter, windy and calm days alternate, but, beginning in June and ending in September, the so-called *Bad-I-sad-o-bist ruz* or 120 days wind blows virtually without cessation. The wind is very violent, averaging perhaps 20-30 miles per hour. During the winter of 1905, members of Seistan Arbitration Commission experienced a violent blizzard. Over a 16 hour period, the anemometers recorded an average hourly wind velocity of 88 miles, at one point the velocity reached 120 miles per hour.....Rock and soil formations are frequently contorted into wind-carved shapes. Tall trees are non-existant," (Fairservis 1961:16).

Eric Nolby has given vivid description of these winds in his travel account (Nolby 1958). The roar of these winds is such that it becomes difficult to listen to a normal talk on an open ground.

As Tate points out, "The beaches mentioned earlier have been formed, and as they are also being formed, by the action of water under the influence of the gales that prevail during summer. The shingle is derived to a great extent from the conglomerate which covers the clay formation of the Dashta which is a gravely plateau. As the water eats into the clay, masses of the latter subside and the conglomerate is broken by the fall and speedily disintegrated by water acting on the coarse matrix, (Tate 1979:111). These gravely plateau Dashta, disintegrating in the post rainy season will be referred to later in the text.

According to Tate, the succeeding ages after water had receded to its present comparatively restricted area, scour of wind has removed alluvial soil and the beach of shingle stands by itself, with beautifully dressed some 10 or more feet, perhaps, above the level of the ground in its neighborhood. In some of the indentations of the geological dalta of Helmand, these shingle beaches are very remarkable. They invariably merge into the general slope of the enclosing headlands and extend perfectly regular curve round the head of indentations," (Tate 1979:112).

"The soil erosion effect is more prominent in the hills of *Koh-i-Khwajah* and *Koh-i-Chako* appear so far as it is possible for an untrained observer to judge, to be formed of lava cap, very nearly horizontal, resting on horizontal (or nearly so) strata of a *kim*. A *kim* is hard stone like strata of gypsum on the top, which is hard to be eroded by wind. This top cap is called *sir* i.e. head or *kim* in the local language. The stratum of the latter immediately below

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the lava cap in the case of *Koh-i-chako*, is that of bright red or orange colour as though it had been baked" (Tate 1979:113). The word *sir* is *Śira* in Sanskrit meaning head or top. Note the colour of the mound top described as bright red or orange.

Mounds and butt formation

"In parts of Seistan the power of wind is very well illustrated. Over the large areas almost the whole of the upper layers of friable clay apparently has been eroded, exposing the level floor of *kim* that lay beneath it. In certain areas the upper strata have not been removed altogether. Where layers or bands of harder material have existed, they have offered resistance to the action of wind, and patched of unequal density have been worn into long mounds whose strike is same as the direction from which the wind blows at present. The windward ends of these mounds are bluff and comparatively rounded while their leeward extremities taper off to a fine point decreasing in height as well as thickness very rapidly. As the softer clay is scoured away by the wind, these mounds act as benchmarks, such as left by railway engineers in excavations in order to enable the latter to be measured. Where such mounds are numerous, the tract looks like an enormous cemetery filled overflowing with the graves of giants. Many of these mounds are fully 15 – 40 feet (5 – 13 Mts) in height, so that to remove the softer clay, by process of erosion and by wind action alone, must have required very many centuries of time. The regular direction of these benchmarks proves that for unknown ages of time, the direction of the strong summer gales has been unchanged and that they have blown exactly from the quarter from which the wind set now." (Tate 1979:114, italics mine).

This geological feature is more prominent in the Trakun region which is delta of the old bed of Helmand called *Rud-i-biyābāna* i.e. river of the desert, in the older times. There are several hundred mounds formed in the Trakun channel area.

The above landscape shows circular mounds with hard flat tops nearly circular in shape. The picture is taken from the area *surh-dagāl*. The formation of these mounds has occurred due to erosive action of the 'winds of hundred twenty days'. It is interesting to note that the word *surh-dagāl* in local language means the 'red earth'. It is so called because of darker colour of the material layer on the top of these mounds. These tops stand contrasted against the ivory-white plain on which they stand (Tate 1979:132).

During his sojourn in the region, Tate had noted that people once inhabited the area of dried *Hāmuns*. Though deserted now, the region South of *Rud-i-biyābāna* was once inhabited by pre-historic civilizations. He reported that during year 1902 CE, immediately

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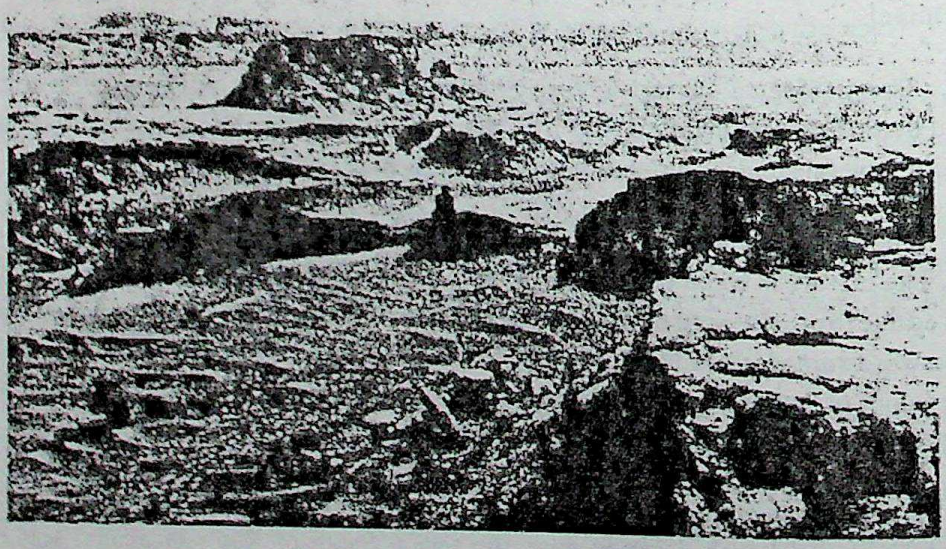
before he undertook his sojourn, the River Helmand ran dry. The local *Hāmun* basins were also dry. The local inhabitants excavated in the basins to unearth the relics of the old civilizations. The area had traces of well, bricks, kilns and existence of masses of vitrified clay, some of which resembled the refuse of smelting furnaces. (Tate 1979:115).

W. A. Fairservis Jr. conducted thorough survey of the area almost half a century later in early 1950s. Fairservis concurs with the observation of Tate. He observes, "The delta of the *Rud-i-biyābāna* fans westward from the Afghan frontier and when watered in prehistoric times must have supported a sizeable population. The artifacts of the pre-historic sites have acted as shield against the extensive wind erosion. As a result, the sites standout as dark mesas formed by wind action. In historic times these mesas were frequently used as foundations for limes towers and small dwellings." (Fairservis 1961:58). Fairservis in his *magnum opus*, "*The roots of Ancient India: The Archeology of Early Civilization*" points out the nature of mounds in the *Rud-i-biyābāna* and Gardan Reg area, "Old branch of the Helmand has discernable dried-up course known as *Rud-i-biyābāna*. Along the banks of this extinct stream one can see the remains of thousand years of occupation made all the more dramatic by the vestiges of irrigation channels and reservoir system of considerable complexity" (Fairservis 1971:118). Fairservis called these numerous mound as "butts". These numerous butts formed in the vicinity of the Site 109, Gardan Reg area are shown in pictures below:



The wind-swept desolation of the Dasht-i-Zirreh of Seistan.
The seated figure is gazing toward the remains of a prehistoric cemetery.

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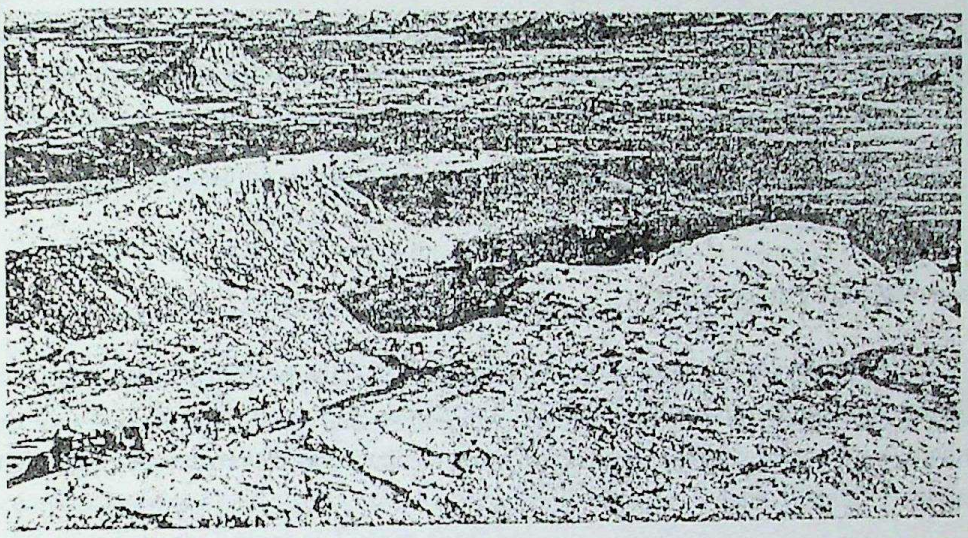

Suhr-da gal butts or hills formed due to erosion as the winds Bad-Sad-o-bist blow over the landscape

Desolate butt area, akin to the Vedic *Pur*s in the vicinity of Site 109

Nature of the Mounds

From the above description, the following conclusions can be drawn about the nature of the mounds formed in the Seistan region:

a. Winds of hundred and twenty days have brought about considerable soil erosion in the Helmand valley.

b. The soil erosion has changed the topology of the region. It has resulted in formation of numerous mounds of 15 -40 ft. height.

c. The top crust of these mounds normally consists of a harder layer of gypsum that resisted erosion by wind. The lower layer is of the soft soil; it has tendency to erode. This has resulted in formation of numerous mounds or butts in this area.

d. These mounds are circular in shape on the windward side and oblong with extremities tapering off on the leeward.

e. These mounds occupy a very large area and their number runs into several hundreds as shown in the pictures above.

f. On the background of the ivory plains in the *suhr-da-gāl* area, the hard red crust of these mound tops standouts as distinct entities with the colour contrast.

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g. There are gravely plateau called Dashta. These are made of clay and gravel conglomerate. As rainwater enters into the clay, mass of Dashtas subsides and conglomerates speedily disintegrate due to action of water on coarse matrix.

h. This disintegration normally occurs in post rainy season, autumn, i.e. in the season of *Śarada* in Sanskrit.

Dāhas or Dāhae in Persian Lore

The Zoroastrian literature refers to the land of *Dāha* or *Dāhae*. The word *Dāha* (masculine) and *dāhi* (feminine) are mentioned in *Farvardin Yasta* (10.144). It is said to be the name of a tribe following the Zoroastrian religion. The term *Dāhae* has an equivalent in Khotanese as *Dāha* i.e. man or a male.

"Herodotus (I.125) refers to a tribe named after these people as *Daoi*. It was a nomadic tribe. The name also occurs in the so-called '*Daeva*-inscriptions' of the Achaemenid King Xerexes (486-465 CE) where *Dāha* are included in the list of thirty *Dahyāva* (lands – provinces) that formed part of the Achaemenid Empire."

Arrian (*Anabasis* 3.11.3-7) reported that the *Dāhae* fought with Alexander in the left wing along with the Bactrians and Aracosians.

The archaeological site of '*Dāhan-ye-Golaman*', i.e. the gateway of slaves is located 2 Km. South of the village of *Qul-a-ye* about 30 Km. Southeast of Zabol in Seistan. Being very close to the Afghan border, it is in the Persian part of the endorrheic basin, originally formed by waters of the Helmand River. It is located on a terrace at the foot of the desert plateau that surrounds the *Hāmun-e-Helmand* basin (Ehsan 1993: *Encyclopedia Iranica,* Vol. VI, pp. 581-582).

Excavations the site of *Dāhan-ye-Golaman* has thrown open a large complex of sacred building with fire altar.

The Land of _Dāsas / Ḍāhae_

According to the Iranian sources, Seistan was the province of the *Dāsas* or *Dāhae* people. These *Dāhae* people were the *Dāsa* people mentioned in the *Ṛgveda* text. It is supported by the local names of the hamlets where these people lived for millennia. In the

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district of Shaharistan in the Seistan province there are several hamlets, which start with word *Deh*. A few examples of the place names given by Tate (*Tate* 1979:341-342) and their Sanskrit equivalents are as follows:

1) *Dāha bāshi Deha – Dāsa bhāśī deśa* – region of people speaking language of *Dāsa*

2) *Deha kula – deśa kula* – region inhabited by family

3) *Deha nau – nava deśa* – new or recently inhabited region.

In fact RV refers to destruction of *Pur*s and ninety-nine regions as "*Dehyaḥ*" of Indra's enemies in RV 6.47.2. Griffith translates it as ramparts. RV 7.6.5 refers to destruction of *Deha* by *Vaiśvānara – Agni*. This confirms that the word "*Deha*" was used as dwelling place in the Rigvedic period. It confirms that in local language '*Deha*' stands for a village or hamlet or region equivalent of *Deśa* in Sanskrit.

There was a group of people who called themselves '*Dāhamardī* '. They were part of the larger social group called *Nuhmardi*. Current corrupt form of *Nuhamardis* is *Numrias* who reside in the Sind province (Tate 1979:308-309). Word *marda* means male, *Dāhamarda* will mean male belonging to *Dāha* clan. Tate gives further information about these tribes residing in Seistan: "The *Gaudāra*s or cattle owners (*Gaudhara* in Sanskrit) are the *Dāhamarda*, *Saruni, Kalb-Ali, Abils* (*Abhirs* in India), and *Dalkhaki* (that is from Dalkhak, a place to the West of *Dilārāma* and one stage from the latter, on the Kandahar-Heart Trade Route). The *Saruni* are also called *Sarvinī* in the country on the Persian side of the boundary. To a very small extent the "*Gaudāra*" tribes cultivate land, and on the Persian side, here and there, the *Dāhamardas* are agriculturists; but the wealth of the tribe consists in the herds of cattle, which they pasture in the reed-beds of the *Hāmun*. Those also engage in agriculture have their cattle stations in the *Naiṣāra* of the *Hāmun* which are placed in charge of their slaves or hired servants; as a rule the cultivating *Gaudāra* are those who do not own many head of cattle." (Tate 1979:303). Tate also gives the number of families, āIn 1904, the *Dāhamardas* in Afghan territory numbered 863 families, *Gaudāras*, and 170 cultivating lands who possibly may have owned cattle also, the *Dalkhakis* 1318 families, cattle owners pure and simple and 4 families who were engaged in agriculture. *Sarunīs* numbered 219 families all cattle owners and 20 cultivating the soil; *Kalbalis* 618 families owning cattle and 55 families who tilled the soil; *Abils* about 541 families cattle owners, and 94 engaged in agriculture. These figure do not include section of these tribes on Persian soil in villages, who were enumerated with other tribes forming the village communities, and it is not possible to separate them. The total *Gaudāra* families, cattle owners pure and simple, numbered (in 1904) about 3411." (Tate 1979:306).

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Fairservis has also referred to *Dāhamardas*. He traces their origin to the migrant group from India (Fairservis 1961:23). They had close interaction with the neighbouring Baluchistan. Views of Fairservis have to be revised. As it will be shown below, *Dāsa* tribes inhabited this region since the Rigvedic times and the *Purs* of *Dāsa* destroyed by Indra belonged to this region only.

There are two hamlets where the tribe called *Kula* has settled. The members of this tribe lived in village *Deha Kula*. Their total population was around 2000-3000 in the year 1904 CE. All these were slaves (Tate 1979:299). Tate lists a tribe named *sanādgul* from village *Deha Jafri*. It is obviously from Sanskrit *Sanat Kula*.

In the current Persian terminology the word *Dāha* means a slave or a servant. Looking at the downtrodden and pathetic status of the *Kula* tribes inhabiting in *Deha Kula* settlements, *Dāhas* or *Dāsas* were reduced to the pitiable condition of abject poverty over a period of millennia. The word *Kula* means family in Sanskrit. The *Deha Kula* settlements were inhabited by the *Dāsakulas*, pointing to their direct association with the Rigvedic lore of the ancient past. It is to be noted that the '*Deh*' names are accompanied mostly by proper names like Amir, Haji, Khan, Ibrahim, etc. this points to the tradition of naming a place or hamlet after the prominent person or a chief *Dāha* or *Dāsa* in the locality in the ancient period. The tradition continued even after conversion to the Islamic faith. The modern hamlet names like Deh Jahangir, Deh Bahalol point to the same trend of beginning the place name with the word *Deha* implying the land or region. The list of place names from the districts of Shaharistan and Mian Kangi exceeding more than fifty are quoted here in Appendex I along with hamlet population and the tribes of inhabitants as given by Tate.

Geo-ethnic correlation

In the Rigvedic lore *Dāsas* are associated with word *Kṛṣṇa*. The King *Rijiśvān* was protected by Indra in collaboration with wind Gods Maruts by destroying *Kṛṣṇāgarbhāḥ* (RV 1.101.1). While Sāyaṇa gives meaning of the word wives of *Asura* named *Kṛṣṇa* and elemination of his family. RTHG translets it as the "*dusky brood*", further commenting that it refers to the black aboriginals vanquished by the *Aryans*. The following *Rcs*. mention names of many other *Dāsa* enemies. RV 2.12.4 mentions *Dāsa varṇam* where the enemies are driven to oblivion. RV 2.20.7 refers to association of *Dāsa* with *Kṛṣṇayonī* and Indra with *Pur* as *Purandaraḥ*. In RV 6.47.21 the word *Kṛṣṇa* is associated with residence or location *Kṛṣṇaḥ jāḥ sadmanaḥ* –born of black abode. The same Rc also mentions about vanquishing of *Dāsas* named Varcin and Śambara.

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The word *yoni* is occasionally used for indicating location in RV text as in RV 10.110.6 *sadatām ni yonau* – seated in a place (location). Yāska while commenting on RV 1.164.32 gave meaning as *yonirantarikṣam* (Nir. 2.8) i.e. indicator of a location. Even SED-VSA gives meaning of *yoni* as an abode, a place, and repository. In that case *Kṛṣṇayonīḥ* or *Kṛṣṇajāḥ* should refer to location associated with the word black and not the skin colour of the so called black aborigines as stated by RTHG.

A geographical map of the Seistan region was prepared by Lieut. the Hon'ble H.D. Napier, Staff Lieut, Intelligence Branch in 1884 under the title "The Report on Seistan and the Country between it and Mashhad." (I got a xerox copy of the map courtsy British Library, London. I thank British Library authorities for the cooperation.)

Along the Helmand River there are several place names starting with *Kālā* which obviously means black – *Kṛṣṇa*. These are *Kālā-i-Gauvak, Kālā-i-Bala, Kālā-Dam-i-Pain, Kālā-i-Falh, Kālā-Ashkinat, Kālā-Nadari Badshah, Kālā-Hindu, Kālā-Zalika.* There are many place names starting with *Deha* in the vicinity of these places, namely *Deh-i-Dadeh, Deh-i-Shanban, Deh-Dost Mohammad, Deh Naib.* All these places are located mostly along the East bank of the Helmand River and lie between 30-31° N 62-63° E. The significance of "*Deh*" can be traced to the Rigvedic period as dealt in the above pages. This fertile delta of the Helmand River was inhabitated since the ancient times. I propose that the word *Kṛṣṇa* i.e. Kālā in connection with these place name has the geographical significance as it has in connection with *surh-da-gāl* mentioned above. It has nothing to do with the skin colour of the *Dāsa* people as it has been thought so far. Thus the words *Kṛṣṇayoniḥ* and *Kṛṣṇajāḥ* indicate the people who belong to these place names starting with *Kālā. It* will be worth investigating to know if thee be any geographical features associated with these place names. Or it is that the people in this region have darker skin complexion? I leave this proposition for the future scholars to explore the geo-ethnic data pertaing to this region and confirm or reject the proposition I made here.

The *Purs* of *Dāsas* in the *Ṛgveda*

The *Ṛgveda* refers to the conflict of the followers of Indra, the *Āryas* with the *Dāsas*. Indra destroyed their dwellings called *Pur* (RV 2.14.6, 2.19.6, 8.17.14, etc.). Indra was, therefore, called Purandara (RV 2.20.7, 2.54.15, etc.). When the cities of the Indus Culture, Harappa and Mohenjodaro were discovered, these were identified with the *Purs* of *Dāsas*. It was proposed that the invading *Aryans* coming from the Central Asia destroyed these cities of *Dāsas*. As such there was controversy among the Indian academics about the

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Aryan and non-*Aryan* conflict. It was thought that the *Aryans* won over the local *Dāsa* population and imposed their culture on the indigenous population.

Sir Mortimer Wheeler, who excavated the site of Mohenjodaro for the second time put it: "Indra stand accused" of destroying the cities of Harappan civilization and of the responsibility for the "*massacre*" at Mohenjodaro. Basham considered the invading *Aryan* to be barbarians and of inferior culture. He wrote, "These people, though unsophisticated in many respects, had superior tools and weapons. Similar settlements were made in Baluchistan at about the same time. Among the scanty remains of these invaders there is clear evidence of the presence of the horse. The Indus cities fell to barbarians who triumphed not only through greater military prowess, but also because they were equipped with better weapons, and had learnt to make full use of the swift and terror striking beast of steppes," (i.e. horse) (Basham 1963:27).

However further excavations and reassessment of the old excavation data pointed to the natural causes of down fall of the Indus cities. The city of Mohenjodaro was flooded due to tectonic shift and did not further revive. Dales sum up the situation of demise of the great city, "The enemy of Harappans was Nature aided and abetted by the Harappans themselves, who accelerated the spoliation of the landscape through improper irrigation practices, and by denuding the watersheds through overgrazing and deforestation. They would have eventually put themselves out of business through such malpractices – just as Sumerians did in southern Mesopotamia – but the process was speeded up by a sardonic twist of the earth as surface. Thus ended one of the three earliest civilizations of antiquity – Indra and the barbarian hoards stand exonerated," (Dales 1979:296).

Subsequently Mortimer Wheeler also revised his views and stated, "Recently, violent geomorphological changes have been blamed for the end of the Indus civilization. In particular context which other writers have either enlarged or decried beyond warrant, I once light-heartedly blamed Indra and his *Aryans* for this phenomenon," (Wheeler 1966:73). But this light-hearted writing created confusion and ethnic problems in India. It harmed the social fabric. Indians have paid dearly for this sardonic twist in archaeology.

Based on recent excavations and interactions of the Indus culture with other contemporary civilizations, Kenoyer sums up the situation, "The archaeological and skeletal evidence clearly do not support any model of invasion or sudden collapse of Mohenjo-Daro, let alone the Indus urban culture as a whole. The decline of Mohenjo-Daro is no longer attributed to Indo-*Aryan* invasion or migrations, disease or floods, as proposed by the earlier

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scholars, but rather to a combination of factors that include the changing river system, the disruption of the subsistence base, and a breakdown in the important integrative factors of trade and religion." (Kenoyer 2007: 44).

If ever, the Rigvedic references state the real conflicts between *Aryas* and *Dāsas*, then the question arises about the identity of *Purs* of *Dāsas* destroyed by Indra. In his excellent monograph, 'Meaning of *Pur* in the Vedic literature', philologist Wilhelm Rau (Rau 1976) has compiled 62 references to the *Pur* from the various Vedic and Brāhmaṇa and post Vedic texts. His conclusions on the nature of *Purs* are as follows:

"The evidence to be gleaned from the foregoing Vedic passages concerning the meaning of *pur/pura/purāh*, *utsedha*, *arma/armaka* does not fit the cities of the Indus civilization. It rather suggests the existence of numerous, frequently concentric, mud or stone ramparts of round or oval ground plan, many a time hastily erected and reinforced by wooden defenses, enclosing thatched timber sheds to serve at the best as temporary homes but more often to shelter men and their cattle at the time of war, water supply and provisions being, therefore of vital importance. We are not surprised, but would actually expect to find no traces of such structures remaining in our days. Towns not cities are mentioned at the end of the Vedic period. Not a word is said in our texts of the characteristic features of the Indus cities, of brick-walls, brick-houses, brick-paved streets laid out on an orthogonal pattern, of granaries or public bath." (Rau 1976:52)

Another scholar Asko Parpola further pursued Rau's line of conclusion. He correlated the archaeological remains at Dashly-3 in northern Afghanistan, dated around 2000 BCE with the *Purs* of *Dāsas* (Parpola 1988:216). The concept of the square in circle plan observed at the site of Dashly-3 and other sites in the Central Asian and Islamic architecture is of the Indo-*Aryan* origin.

"The concept is clearly not of the Arabian origin, but rather was adopted from Iran and Central Asia as the *dar-al-imara* at Merv indicates. The third century A.D. residential city of *Ar-deshir* at Gur Firuzabad follows this plan, but it does not seem to have predecessor. But when we turn to the East, we find the symbol of the wheel in Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism, as well as *maṇḍala* drawn as square inscribed in circle with gates at the cardinal points. The oldest architectural '*maṇḍala*' discovered to date was found by Soviet-Afghan archaeological expedition to the oasis of Dashly-3. Corridors about a meter in width surround a central court (38x40 meters); on each side a 'T-shaped' corridor is added and each corner has two-hook shaped 'corridors'. A small palace was built on the Northern side

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of the court. The structure should be dated in the first centuries of the second millennium B.C. . . . . At Dashly-3, a large square (?) architectural unit circumscribed a round centre composed of nine towers and a fire temple, the whole enclosed by several rings made up of residential structures" (Bretnjes 1991:180).

The present author has earlier dealt with the concentric nature of the *Purs* as stated by Rau and interpreted by Parpola to be ancient city at Dashly-3 (Pathak 1997:80-85). There he has mentioned his disagreement with Parpola on the concentric nature of the *Purs* on the following grounds:

While the Vedic *Purs* were temporary structures, the monumental structures at Dashly-3 and other similar structures were permanent residential quarters. The Vedic *Purs* were being made of mud and stone; they corroborate with the mound formed due to the wind erosion. These mounds or butts fit the description of *Purs* as 'numerous, frequently concentric, mud or stone ramparts of round or oval plan. . . ."(Rau 1976:52). The proposition can be further elaborated for other features of the mounds.

The reason for stating *Purs* to be concentric was given that a deity could exist simultaneously in may *Purs*. These deities are Maruts (RV 1.166.8) and Agni (RV 7.15.14). Obviously the wind and fire could simultaneously exist in several places. So these need not be concentric.

Identification of *Purs* and the land of the Rigvedic *Dāsas*

It is now possible to identify the Rigvedic *Purs* and the land of the Rigvedic *Dāsas*:

1. The mound tops are composed of red soil and stand out against the ivory-white landscape. These are called *surh-dagal* which means red earth (Tate 1979:133). The red colour of the mound tops confirm their Rigvedic description as *Ayasī purāḥ*, i.e. copper like appearance of the *Purs* (RV 2.20.8, 4.27.1., 7.15.14; 95.1).

2. They are very large in numbers, which confirms their possibility of being ninety-nine *navati-nava* (RV 2.19.6, 6.47.2, 7.99.5) hundred *Śatam* in RV 4.30.20.

3. Indra is stated to have entered and destroyed ninety (RV I.130.7) *Purs*. The realistic number seven-*sapta purāḥ* occurs in RV 1.174.2 and 6. 20.10. He destroyed ninety-nine *Purs* quickly (RV 7.19.5). The numbers indicated here are to be taken allegorically. These have to be in very large numbers. It is possible to destroy them in such large numbers only when there are several butts in the close vicinity of each

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other. They were not properly built. These were described as crude - *amā* (RV 2.35.6). They were composed of stones – *aśmanaḥ* (RV 6.43.3) and were full of stones – *aśmanmayī* (RV 4.30.20). These therefore, do not describe the remains of well-planned Indus cities built of bricks, gridiron pattern of streets with separate localities. W. Rau has highlighted this aspect.

4. Tate refers to the gravely plateau called Dashtas which disintegrate in autumn. Indra destroyed *śāradī Purs* of *Dāsas* (RV 1.131.4, 1.174.2, 6.20.10). It is evident that the Vedic seers were referring to these gravely plateau when they described as *śāradī Purs*. It is necessary to further look into the geological aspects of these Dashtas. This I leave for the future generation of scholars to investigate and elaborate.

5. The speedy winds of *Bād-I-sad-o-bist* blowing in this area are proposed to be the Vedic Maruts. They were praised to protect the worshippers as stated to be *janam yam* (RV 1.166.8). These *Purs* were described as *śatabhuji* (RV 7. 15.14).

6. Both Rau and Parpola have considered these *Purs* to be concentric for two reasons, a) as these were circular or oval in shape and b) as *Agni* was present in all of them. Top of these *Purs* are not exactly circular but, as described by Tate, are roughly oblong. Both Maruts and Agni could be simultaneously be present in all these *Purs* even if they are separate. Therefore, *Purs* need not be concentric (Pathak 1997:84).

7. The tribe or the group of *Dāsas* was not isolated from the *Aryans* and other civilizations. There was close interaction between the Seistan region and the Indus valley dating back to 3800 BCE. It is pre-Indus Culture period. Archaeological excavations point to continued interactions even during the Indus Culture period. As late as 324 BCE, *Dāsa* people were soldiers in the army of Alexander the Great.

8. The mounds or butts being brittle in nature, some of these could be easily demolished to expose *Dāsas* taking shelter behind them, while the battles were in progress.

9. *Aryas* of the Rigvedic lore followed *Dāśas* to Seistan. *Arya-Dāsa* conflict occurred around mounds in *Surh-dagal* area. It can be identified as *Ayasī Purs*. These were destroyed or demolished. The campaigns must have occurred in the *Śarada* season.

10. The Vedic seer attributed this destruction to God Indra.

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11. The social groups of *Dāhamardas* and those belonging to *Kuls* have resided in this area since the Rigvedic times. They were reduced to the state of destitution and slavery by the time Tate visited that region.

12. In the districts of Shaharistan and Mian Kangi there are villages with names starting with *deh* and hamlets named after *Kul*. These date back to the Rigvedic times. *Rgveda* refers to *Deh* as a locality. So it is possible to identify Seistan region, especially around the villages like Dah-Bashi-Deh, Deh-Kul and Deh-nau and in the valley of Helmand river where there are villages with names starting with *Kālā* and *Deh* to be the land of *Dāsa* people since the Rigvedic times.

The Identity of deity trio:

Apām Napāt, Aja Ekapād* and *Ahirbudhnya

The Vedic deity trio *Apām Napāt*, *Aja Ekapād* and *Ahirbudhnya* from the *Rgveda* lore represent the natural phenomena of Afghan storms. They represent the tornado forming cyclonic vortex. While the first deity *Apām Napāt* is mentioned in the *Rgveda* and a hymn RV 2.35 is dedicated to the deity; other two are mentioned in passing in the Vedic literature. The meaning of these three words has significance. While *Apām Napāt* means descendent of water, *Aja Ekapād* is single footed goat and *Ahirbudhnya* means the serpent belonging to the sky.

Apām Napāt has special significance as the deity is mentioned in the Avestan literature in Ys.i.5; ii.5; Sir.i.7, etc. As in the RV lore, in the Avesta also, *Apām Napāt* means a child of water. *Apām Napāt* portions out waters (Yt.viii.34). He brings the Kingly *Xvarenah* to the depths of *Vourukasa* (Yt. XIX. 51-52). His name was given to the eighth month of the Cappadocian calendar to honour Him.

To understand the nature of these three deities, it is necessary to understand the phenomena of cyclones and environment in North Afghanistan. Whenever a cyclonic storm

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or tornado occurs, it undergoes five stages in its life cycle. These are i) dust-swirl stage, ii) organizing stage, iii) mature stage, iv) shrinking stage and v) decaying stage. The following physical characteristics of the cyclonic storms are also noted:

a) Funnel – it has spiral vortex of rapidly rotating water particles and particulate matter. The tornadoes formed on the water bodies are accompanied by water spouts which are formed due to lifting of surface water by the cyclonic wind.

b) Wall of the funnel – it consists of moving water cloud with wind in spiral motion and forms vortex. The rotational speeds are extremely high; sometimes exceeding the speed of sound, breaking the sonic barrier of 1200 Km/hr. It is active and the most destructive part of the tornadoes.

c) Auto-electricity – Often the sand and silt particles from the low-pressure belt get blown along with the speedily rotating air. They move towards the funnel of a tornado at a great speed. It results in particulate attrition and sparking over the wall of the funnel. The funnel then exhibits the phenomenon of auto-electricity. The revolving funnel appears to glow with sparks (Nalivkin 1982: 182).

The meteorologists have classified the storms in the North Afghanistan into a separate class. Nalivkin has described an Afghan storm in details. The storms there often exhibit the phenomenon of auto-electricity. During these storms auto-electricity reaches high, to such an extent, that the snowflakes are seen illuminated with blue flashes and myriads of small electric discharges looking like millions of glow-worms (Nalivkin 1982: 183).

The Rigvedic description of the deity trio *Apām Napāt*, *Aja Ekapād* and *Ahirbudhnya* fit the description of the three stages of the cyclonic storm and formation of waterspout on the large water pools. The *Rgveda* hymn 2.35 is in praise of the deity *Apām Napāt*. The epithet of *Apām Napāt* from the Rigvedic lore matches with the mature stage of a cyclonic storm. Comparison of appearance of a cyclonic storm with the Rigvedic description is given in the following table:

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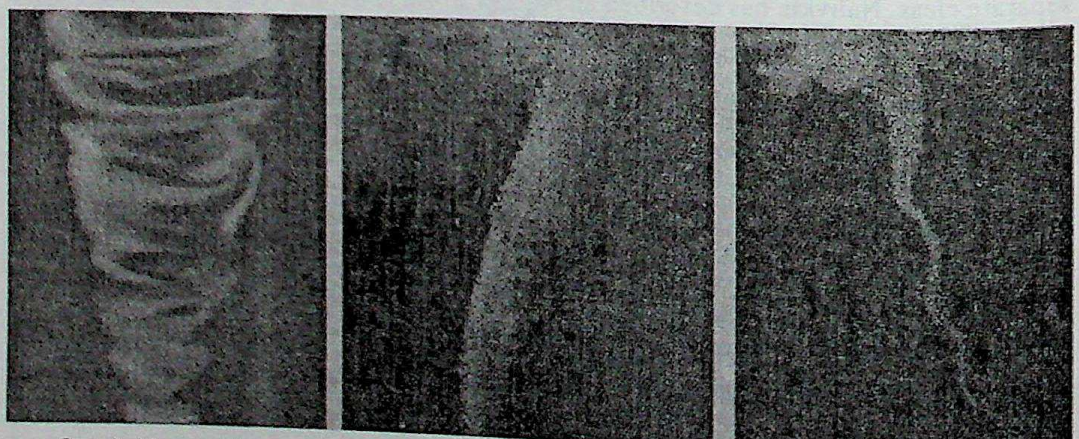
TABLE 1: Comparison of the appearance of a cyclone with the description of the Vedic Deity *Apām Napāt* in RV 2.35 and 10.30

RV reference	Description in the RV	Matching with cyclone state
2.35.1	*nādyaḥ*	Formed over rivers or large water pools
2.35.1	*āśuheman*	Moving speedily
2.35.3	*āpaḥ pari tasthuḥ*	Waterspout, encircling water
2.35.4	*apsu anidhmaḥ dīdayat*	Appears to burn without fuel
2.35.9	*ūrdhvaḥ upastham*	Waterspout or vortex in the mid region
2.35.9	*vidyutam vasānaḥ*	Clothed in garments of lightening
2.35.9	*ūtsam pari vicarantam*	Moving like a water well
2.35.10	*hiraṇyavarṇaḥ*	Glittering on account of auto-electricity
10.30.9	*ūtsam pari vicarantam*	Moving like a water well

The Vedic deity trio *Apām Napāt*, *Aja Ekapād* and *Ahirbudhnya* represent three stages of a cyclonic storm (Pathak 1991: 39-51 and 1999:31-34). The Deity *Apām Napāt* represents the full-blown storm. *Aja Ekapād* i.e. a single footed goat, is the stage of a tornado when the funnel is shrinking slowly and extends high up in sky. It is seen to recede fast away from the observer; *Ahirbudhnya* means serpent in the sky: *Ahi* – serpent and *Budhnya* – sky (*Pathak* 1991:52). Keen observation of the cyclonic storms in the North Afghan region enabled the Vedic seers to understand the natural phenomena in correct perspective. As the worshippers of the natural forces, they deified the phenomena in deity trio. From the vivid description of the various facet of the cyclone, it was obvious that the seer *Gṛtsamadaḥ Bhārgavaḥ Śaunakaḥ* of the hymn RV 2.35 had the firsthand experience of the Afghan storm as quoted by Nalivkin earlier.



Stage I : Mature cyclone
Apām Napāt

Stage II : Shrinking stage
Aja Ekapād

Stage III : Decaying stage
Ahirbudhnya

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IN PRAISE OF MARUTS –

THE *BAD-I-SAD-O-BIST* WINDS

IN AFGHANISTAN

Maruts – the Afghan Deities

In my earlier book, *THE AFGHAN CONNECTION* (Pathak 1999:35-36), I had dealt in brief on the identification of the Rigvedic deities Maruts that these are the seasonal winds, *bād-i-sad-o-bist* blowing in Afghanistan. The Rigvedic deities Maruts are the major deities in the Rigvedic pantheon of gods. As it is understood today, they represent wind gods, the most powerful and different from Vāyu. While Vāyu is never compared to the birds, Maruts are often thus compared (RV 1.87.2, 1.88.1 etc.). In the *Cāturmāsya* ceremonies, i.e. during the four months of rainy season, they are accorded a high place and honoured with oblations. Hillebrandt, pointing to many other rites in different *yajña* ceremonies, has considered the following possibility: 'whether in the eyes of the ritualists the Maruts have already become full-fledged wind gods, and more especially wind gods belonging to different seasons' (Hillebrandt 1965:II 185).

Maruts are never mentioned as single entity. Correlating these wind gods with the *Cāturmāsya* ceremony, Maruts are to be identified with the winds that blow in Afghanistan from June to September. These are aptly called *bād-i-sad-o-bist*, winds of hundred and twenty days, the term, which can be traced to its Sanskrit roots – *śata viṁśati vātāḥ. (bād - vāta, bist - viṁśati, sad - śata).* The RV further supports the proposition. The seasonal winds *bād-i-sad-o-bist* known to be making roaring sounds such that many a time it is not possible to converse in open. In a doubtless reference to the roaring sound of *bād-i-sad-o-bist*, Maruts are stated to be singing songs (RV 1.19.4; 1.166.7). They are called the singers of the heaven (RV 5.57.5) and several times the singers (RV 5.52.1 etc.). Translation of the RV *Rc*s by R.T. H. Griffith is quoted here (1992 ed.).

In other *Rc*, they are urged to crossover the rivers in Afghanistan.

mā vo rasānitabhā kubhā krumurmā vaḥ sindhurni rīramat ।
mā vaḥ pari ṣthāt sarayuḥ purīṣiṇyasme it sumnamastu vaḥ ॥
(RV 5.53.9)

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Tr. : "Let not *Rasā*, *Krumu*, or *Anitabhā*, or *Kubhā*, or *Sindhu* hold you back, Let not watery *Sarayu* obstruct your way, ye bestow us with all the bliss."

The association of deity Maruts with *Cāturmāsya* ceremony, their roaring sound as that of *bād-i-sad-o bist* and direct reference to the major rivers in Afghanistan confirms that the Vedic seers perceived them to be originating in Afghanistan.

Vedic seers on Maruts

Vedic seer *Kaṇva Ghaura*, who possibly belonged to the Ghora region of Afghanistan, praises Maruts in two hymns, RV 1.37 and 1.38. Both the hymns are in the *Gāyatrī* metre.

The description in the hymns elaborates on the nature of Maruts.

iheva śṛṇva eṣām kaśā hasteṣu yadvadān |
ni yāmañcitramṛñjate || (RV 1.37.3)

Tr.: "One hears, as though it were close at hand, the cracking of the whips they hold; They gather glory on their way."

The roaring sound of *bād-i-sad-o-bist* is described as deafening and very close. The description of 'cracking of whips' at the hands of Maruts is appropriate.

ni vo yāmāya mānuṣo dadhra ugrāya manyave |
jihīta parvato giriḥ || (RV 1.37.7)

Tr.: At your approach, man holds him down before fury of your wrath; the rugged-jointed mountain yields.

pra yāta śībhamāśubhiḥ santi kaṇveṣu vo duvaḥ |
tatro ṣu mādayādhvai || (RV 1.37.14)

Tr.: "Come quick with swift steeds, for ye have worshippers among *Kaṇva*'s sons; may you rejoice among them well."

This is allegorical description of the winds blowing at high speed of more than 100 miles per hour. The *bād-i-sad-o-bist* winds blow for four months and then subside. There is no distinction between the winds for these hundred and twenty days. They are uniform.

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These aspects of the *bād-i-sad-o-bist* winds are also described in the RV *Rcs*. As Macdonell (1981:78) has summarized, : 'They are brothers among whom none is oldest or youngest (RV 5.59.6; 60.5) for they are equal in age (RV 1.165.1). They have grown together (5.56.5; 7.58.1) and are of one mind (RV 8.20.1). They have the same birthplace (RV5.53.3) and the same abode (1.165.1; 7.56.1). They are spoken of as having grown on earth, in air and in heaven (RV 5.55.7) or as dwelling in the three heavens (RV 5.60.6).

Macdonell has identified Maruts as the clouds charged with rain and lightening (Macdonell 1981:78). Present author differs with Macdonell for clouds do not make whipping sound, nor do they hold man down. On the contrary Maruts have to be distinguished from clouds, because they induce profuse rains such that kine have to walk in knee deep water (RV 1.37.10) and they carry away the dry, not raining, clouds. (RV 1.37.11)

tyam cidghā dīrgham pṛthum miho napātamamṛdhram ।
pra cyāvayanti yāmabhiḥ ।। (RV 1.37.11)

Tr: "Before them, on the ways they go, they drop this offspring of cloud, long, broad, and inexhaustible."

yadyūyam pṛśnimātaro martāsaḥ syātana ।
stotā vo amṛtaḥ syāt ।। (RV 1.38.4)

Tr: "If, O ye Maruts, Ye the Sons whom *pṛśni* bore, were mortal, and immortal he who sings your praise."

In the above *Rc* seer refers to mortality of the Maruts. It is obvious from the fact that every year these winds blow for the limited period of four months only. It also confirms that these winds are *bād-i-sad-o-bist.*

Maruts were the harbingers of rains. They were the carriers of rains. Incidentally, the ancient seers were aware of the fact that formation of cloud takes place from the ocean water and the Maruts propelled the rain making clouds inland.

udīrayathā marutaḥ samudrato yūyam vṛṣṭim varṣayathā purīṣiṇaḥ ।
(RV 5.55.5a)

Tr: "O Maruts, from the Ocean Ye uplift the rain, and fraught with vaporous moisture pour the torrents down."

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Ritual for Maruts

Maruts were prominent deities in the *Cāturmāsya* ceremony. They were offered a spotted cow in sacrifice (Hillebrandt 1981:Vol. II. p. 64). In a long hymn RV 8.7.1-36, seer *Punarvatsa Kāṇva* refers to participation of Maruts in the Soma sacrifice. He refers to their abode in the region of *Suṣomā, Śaryaṇāvat* and *Ārjīkā.* (8.7.29). These three names appear together in other two hymns, RV 8.64.11; 10.75.5. Their location has been debated as the Soma was grown in the region thus named. As it is now possible to identify the Maruts as deities rooted in Afghanistan, it is possible to locate these three locations in Afghanistan, i.e. towards west of river *Vitastā* i.e. Jhelum.

Axe for Maruts

Many seers describe Maruts wielding axe as their weapon (RV 1.37.2, 1.88.3, 5.57.2 etc.). In the *Rc* RV 8.7.32 the seer refers to Maruts wielding a golden axe.

saho ṣu ṇo vajrahastaiḥ kaṇvāso agnim marudbhiḥ |
stuṣe hiraṇyavāśībhiḥ || (RV 8.7.32)

Tr: "The Kaṇvas sing forth Agni's praise together with our Maruts who, wield thunder and wear golden axe."

Maruts are also compared with fire in RV 6.66.2.

Incidentally a gold plated silver axe of maximum 12.68 cm length with *gaṇḍābheruṇḍā* statue was found in Afghanistan and dated around 1900-1700 BCE. Its picture is published in Time – Life Education Volume of 1987 P156. I have earlier reported it in my book (The Afghan Connection 1999:16). The following information on the golden axe is quoted from 'Ceremonial Axe' (‹http//www.georgeortiz.com/TEXT/0140›), which deals with the similar axes found in the region of North Afghanistan and Bacteria.

"The whole was cast by the lost wax process. The boar covered with a sheet of gold annealed and hammered on, some 3/10 – 6/10 mm in thickness, almost all joints covered with silver. At the base of the mane between the shoulders and an oval motif with irregular indents. The lion and the boar hammered, elaborately chased and polished—the closest

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parallel stylistically is the famous silver axe in New York with an almost identical shaft opening, but laced with silver wire, and hole for the dowel (The picture of the New York axe is given below). The New York axe is ritualistic and clearly thematic as it illustrates some myth, saga or religious belief which may explain a certain stiffness.' (Page 1-2) There are at least three more similar axes reported in the above web article. It indicates that the Soma offering sacrificial ritual, where these axes were used, was popular in the region.

It is now possible to understand the significance of bird figure with dual head on the gold plated axe and figures of lion and of wild boar with pointed tusk depicted on the axe. The two heads of the bird figure represent the dual deity Agni and Maruts who fly high in sky. It confirms the indication in the web article that the axes were possibly used in sacrifices to Agni and Maruts as described in hymn RV 8.7.32.

Maruts are described as roaring like mighty lions –

'*siṁhā iva nānadati pracetasaḥ*' (RV 1.64.8).

They are compared with wild boar with pointed tusks –

paṣyanhiraṇyacakrānayodaṁṣṭrānvidhāvato varāhūn | (RV 1.88.5b)

Tr.: 'What time upon your golden wheels he (Gotama) saw you, wild boars rushing about with metallic tusks.'

The roaring lion on the left and wild boar head with pointed tusk on the right, both are representations of the Maruts as described in these *Rc*s.

CONCLUSIONS

As proposed by the author in earlier book, '*The Afghan Connection*' Rigvedic details further confirm that the group of Gods, Maruts were the annual winds *bad-i-sad-o-bist* blowing for hundred and twenty days from June to September in Afghanistan.

The *Kāṇva* clan of Rigvedic seers, at least some of them, certainly hailed from Afghanistan. They described Maruts in realistic manner.

Since Maruts and Soma came from the same region of *Suṣomā, Śaryaṇāvat* and *Ārjīkā*, the region was further west of the river Jhelum.

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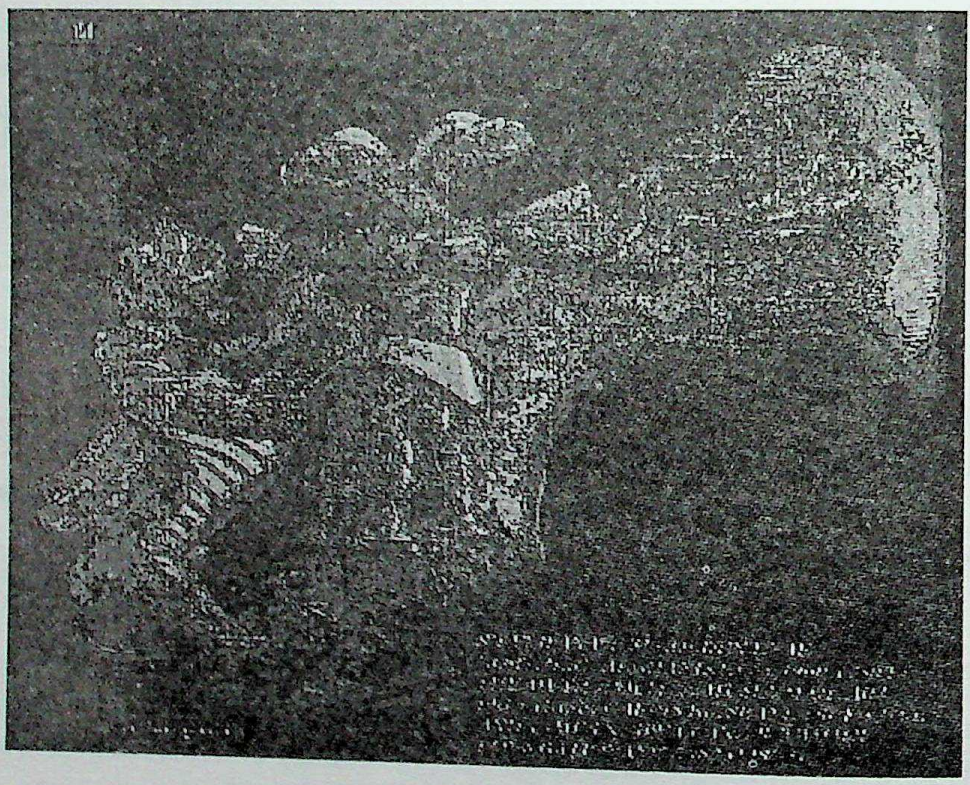
Maruts are stated to be wielding golden axe along with Agni. The golden axes found in Afghanistan were used in ceremonies for Maruts. The *gaṇḍabheruṇḍa* figure on the axe represents dual deity Maruts and Agni.

GOLDEN AXE FOR MARUTS

IN METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ARTS



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THE INDUS CULTURE SECTION
INTERPRETATION OF THE INDUS SEALS
AS PICTORIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE VEDIC HYMNS

Classification of the Indus Seals

Over the last seven decades, numerous Indus Culture sites have been excavated. The major centres of Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Kalibangan, Lothal, Dholavira have yielded many seals, sealings and terracotta impressions. Other sites have yielded only a few seals each and at many other sites not even one seal was found. These seals were reported in many reports by the excavating teams. However Jagatpati Joshi from India, S. G. M. Shah from Pakistan and Asko Parpola from Finland have accomplished the great job of collecting these together in two volumes; one from India and other from Pakistan (Joshi and Parpola 1987; Shah and Parpola 1991).

Many people have spent years to decipher the Indus script and they have come out with their own decipherment and reading. There are four schools of thought on interpretation of the Indus script namely a) Dravidian origin, b) Vedic origin, c) parallels with the Sumerian and Middle Eastern seals and d) Independent or secular interpretation. To this classification I have added my approach of interpreting the Indus seals as pictorial representation of the Vedic hymns, wherein I have not given any clues for understanding the script. The articles dealing with my approach are given after this article. Readers will be able to read the details of my approach in these articles.

There have been serious attempts at classifying the symbols of the Indus script. These are well documented namely by Russian scholars, Finish scholars and Indian scholar Iravatham Mahadevan. But not much attention was paid to classify the seals according to the pictures, legends or graffiti engraved on them.

An earlier attempt at the classification of the animal seals in particular, was done by Atre (1990). She had expressed her views that the human figure on the Paśupati seal is the Lady of the Beasts. With that assumption she proceeded to classify the animal seals into four categories:

a) animals that may either be with a manger or without it,
b) animals that are without a manger,
c) animals never with a manger, and
d) animals always associated with a manger.

Thereafter, she comments, "The animal variety being, entirely tamable animals, totally domesticated – conveying supreme command of the goddess over animal world and also gradation in her regime. Indeed, the restrained static posture is the only clue to assert that

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though it does not hold exactly a subordinate position to the goddess, it neither assumes a superior position of the male spouse. It might have been assigned a special status of a fecundating agent of the goddess" (Atre 1990: 45). I have refuted the 'Mother Goddess' hypothesis by Atre (Pathak 1991). Her theory on the role of the animals is entirely speculative.

The seal classification proposed in Table 1 is on the basis of seal engravings and pictures of the objects on the seals:

Table 1 Classification of the Indus Culture seals

No.	Class of Seal	Remarks
1	Sacred humpless bull with single horn and filter in front	This is the most important class and more than 40% of the total number of seals (1082 out of 2500) belong to this category.
2	Sacred humpless bull with two horns with flat manger and sacred filter in front	This class of seals is another major type, numbering 89.
3	Multiple-head sacred bull	These seals bear a single bull body with two or three bull heads which are single as well as double-horned. There is a single circular seal M-117 with a six-horned bull joined together. There are seven such seals.
4	Typical Brahmi bull with prominent hump	This is the third largest class with 53 seals reported. It is to be noted that none of these Brahmi bull seals have a sacred filter engraved in front of the bull figures.
5	Single Animal figure	There are numerous animal figure seals depicting individual animals including tigers, elephants, rhinoceroses, goats, buffaloes, and occasionally camels. The only reptiles engraved on the seals are cobras and crocodiles. Lions, with a natural habitat around the Gir forest in Gujarat are absent, as are birds except for a single eagle seal from Harappa (H-166). The horse, a controversial animal often mentioned in the *Rgveda*, is totally absent.

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6	Multiple animals	Many seals carry pictures of many animals either of the same species or of different species. A rectangular seal with two bulls locking horns (M-1352), another seal bearing a picture of two deers, etc. are the seals of the first kind. There are many seals bearing pictures of different animals.
7	*Svastika*	There are seven such seals. This is another large group where the *svastikas* are of both types i.e. clockwise and anti-clockwise. It appears that the *svastika* symbol was accorded a sacred status. It has continued till today.
8	Decorative designs and secular patterns	The decorative patterns include chequered rectangular patterns, small circles in rows and beam matrices, concentric circles with a dot at the centre. Three circular seals with different decorative patterns form the above-mentioned are unearthed from Zhukar. Puzzle-like patterns with the endless knot motif are present.
9	Tree and plant species	Apart from drawings of plant species on multiple figure seals, there are a few seals bearing pictures of single plant species. These are vertical plants with lots of branches and foliage like H-183 to H-195. A few small seals bear pictures of Pipal (Ficus religiosa) leaves.
10	Exclusive graffiti	This is another large class of seals. A majority of these seals are rectangular in shape but a few are circular. There are 247 seals of this type. Graffiti on some of these seals is totally obliterated and some bear script symbols posing a real challenge to scholars and researchers of various disciplines to decipher.
11	Hunter and tiger hunting	A few copper tablets from Mohenjodaro bear the picture of a hunter with bow and arrow (M-582 to 588). There are 12 seals bearing the image of a tiger and a hunter sitting on a tree behind the tiger. The tiger is shown looking backwards at the hunter.

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12	Centaur seals	A chimera-like figure with an animal torso attached to a standing human figure was found at Mohenjo-daro (M-311), Kalibangan (K-50) and on a cylinder types seal (K-65). The rectangular seal from Mohenjo-daro and Kalibangan bears an inscription of two script signs while the cylindrical seal from Kalibangan does not bear any script signs.
13	Legend Seals	These depict more than one human or animal as if these convey some story or message.

The Legend Seals

I have classified some seals as the legend or myth seals. This class of seals could really provide clues for our understanding of the origin of the Indus culture. These legend seals can be defined as seals bearing more than one animal or human figure and convey some message or legend either from the ancient Indian or Middle Eastern region. The legend seals have attracted the attention of scholars. I have interpreted some of these seals.

Gilgamesh seals

There are three seals from Mohenjo-daro (M-306, M-307 and M-308) bearing Indus graffiti on the top. These seals depict a human figure holding two tigers at bay. This is a representation of the Gilgamesh myth from the Middle East. The seal can be compared with the uninscribed Gilgamesh myth seal showing a royal figure holding lions at bay (Tiessier 1984: seal no.290) dated to around 521-450 BCE i.e. the Achaemenian period (Teissier 1984: 182).

A lion appears on many seals from the Middle Eastern civilizations. The Indus seal points to its origin being in India, because two tigers and not lions are engraved on these seals. Although the graffiti on the top differs, the pictorial inscriptions are similar.

In the Middle East there are variations of the animals held at bay by the hero dating both to the Akkadian and post-Akkadian period (2334 BCE. to 2154 BCE), and the Achaemanian period (542-450 BCE) (Tiessier 1984: 182). The seals of the earlier period are: (i) hero standing between two pairs of antelopes fighting with lion on each side (Seal No. 73). (ii) man in combat with a bearded bull (Seal No. 75), (iii) hero attacking a lion attacking

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a bull (Seal No. 76), (iv) hero attacking water buffalo and bull-man attacking a lion (Seal No.78); while seals of the later period are (v) hero holding at bay two winged bulls (Seal No. 289), (vi) hero holding at bay two sphinxes (Seal No.291), (vii) hero holding at bay two ibex-men (Seal No.292), and (viii) hero holding at bay two ibexes (Seal No. 293).

There is no parallel to the Gilgamesh legend in Indian mythology. Hence the idea of this seal appears to have its origin in the Middle East although it was engraved in India. Gilgamesh seals have not yet helped to decipher the script on the top. There is only one sign, common between the two seals namely, M-306 and M-307.

It is likely that a trader who was from the Middle East got engraved these legend seals depicting Middle Eastern myth by or a local trader exporting goods to Middle East got these carved as the insignia for himself. These were then used to stamp goods exported to the Middle East bearing. It is also possible that an Indus merchant, having travelled to the Middle East was influenced by the myth but had his seals carved with Indian tigers flanking the hero.

Indus Culture seals as pictorial representations of the Vedic hymns

In the following sections, author has dealt with the legend seals conveying specific messages. He has proposed that the Indus Culture seals are pictorial representations of the Vedic hymns, especially the AV hymns.

The Paśupati Seals as Pictorial representation of AV 2.34

Lady of the Beasts or Lord of Beasts: An Appraisal

The famous Paśupati seal has been one of the most significant finds of the Indus Culture. Although the seal title is more or less established, the nature of the deity has been debated. Earlier Sulivan (1964) has expressed views that the deity was the "Mistress of Beasts" stating that hunting was most clearly an important activity in the peasant communities of Sind and Baluchistan. He concluded, "It is unlikely, then, the goddess should have been not only the giver of vegetational life but also the 'Mistress of Beasts' and the patroness of the hunt." He drew attention to two other seals where pigtails of the deity are clearly visible on the seals. Shubhangana Atre from Deccan College, Pune, expressed different views (Atre 1986). According to Atre, the deity is neither the lord of beasts, nor the Mother Goddess but is 'virgin of beasts'. In support of her views, Atre has drawn parallels with the other seals, representing the same deity and the Mother Goddess statues from the Indus Culture. She has drawn parallels of a pictorial representation on the seal from Kalibangan with the Greek

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ritual of female sacrifice. She concludes that the deity on the Paśupati seal is a female deity representing the virgin of beasts.

In the present article I have refuted the view of the central deity being a female deity by comparisons with the rituals and internal parallels supported by other seals from the Indus sites. The methodology of drawing parallels as applied in the area of ancient literature is more or less accepted in the field of the Indus Culture studies.

Methodology

So long as a bilingual seal or graffiti is not traced or found, decipherment of the Indus seals will have to be attempted by comparisons and parallels. Asko Parpola (1985) has given three widely accepted routes for drawing parallels and interpretation: "There can be no doubt that three most important sources for interpretation (of the Indus seals) are (1) the internal parallels supplied by the Harappan civilization itself, (2) those provided by ancient West Asia, (3) those provided by the later civilizations. By the later Indian civilizations Parpola implies the post –Vedic period. But his contempt for those drawing parallels from the Vedic civilization is not concealed, when he writes, "while some fanatics, especially in India have tried to force Vedic analogies to back up their preconceived claims of the Aryan identity of the Indus people, the sober scholars have usually cited parallels from the post Vedic, classical Hinduism or from the modern times. (*He has drawn these post-Vedic parallels himself.*) These comparisons with Hinduism have often been accepted, at least tentatively (*by himself*), with the result that some identifications have been repeated from one book to another (*he has written*)" (Parpola 1985:12) (Italics mine). Here the personal bias of Parpola has overcome the true scholar within. On the contrary, throughout his monograph "Sky garment", Parpola has drawn parallels from the Vedic literature, however his sudden shift to the Dravidian roots of the Indus Culture is astonishing. It is a different topic altogether. In support of his argument he repeats the theory propounded earlier, that the Aryans invaded the Indus region in two waves, first to come were *dāsas* relatable to the Hissar III culture of the north eastern Iran and then came the Rigvedic Aryans. The Vedic literature is the outcome of those two successive large scale acculturations. Atre too follows the similar line of arguments stepping out of India in search of roots. For her, it will be more "appropriate that we free the Harappan civilization or to be more precise the Harappan religion from the narrow frame of either the Vedic or of the later Hinduism."

But it becomes equally difficult to accept the proposition to relate the so-called virginity cult in the Indus civilization with the very late Diana worship in the Greek culture

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around 495 BC. It is as if the Indus culture and the religion totally disappeared from the continental area extending from Afghanistan to Uttar Pradesh and from Himachal Pradesh to Diamabad in Maharashtra and took solid roots in the distant Greek Islands after remaining dormant for centuries. On the other hand one finds such a smooth continuity of ideas from the Indus civilization, nay from the pre-Indus periods to the present day Hinduism that it becomes absolutely untenable to alienate the Indus Culture from the present Hindu cultural ethos, inclusive of the Vedic and the post Vedic traditions.

If one is to follow Parpola regarding his views drawing parallels from the classical and the present day Hinduism, obvious contradictions arise. If the Aryans had completely wiped out the Indus culture, how could the post Vedic, the classical and the present day Hinduism be replete with the Indus culture antecedents? How could the Vedic culture remain completely aloof? It was not so. There is continuity of cultural and religious beliefs ever since the pre-Indus culture periods. Religious beliefs through symbols have been recurring since the pre-Indus period. Some of these are dealt with below. The list is not exclusive, these are many more parallels, but only the most prominent ones, especially those referred to by Parpola are dealt with here.

Continuity of beliefs and religious ideas

Aśvattha leaves and tree: Popularly known as Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) the tree has special significance in the Vedic as well as later day Hindu religion. Its leaves were painted on the Indus pottery depicting sanctity. Parpola refers to the significance of the leaves in the *Ṛgveda* etc. Pipal tree appears to have acquired sanctity even before the Indus culture period. The Pipal leaves are painted on the pottery of the Period IV at Mehergarh belonging to the third quarter of the 4th millennium and also on the Mundigak pottery belonging to the Period IV -1 of the immediate past of the Indus civilization time span. The Pipal tree, branches and leaves are painted on several earthen pots of the Indus period. There are many Indus seals bearing the Pipal leaf marks. In the Vedic, the post Vedic and also in the current Hindu tradition the *Aśvattha* occupies the position akin to godhood. The analogy of *Aśvattha* in the *Bhagavadgītā* Chapter XV is famous.

Peacock: This bird is often painted on the pre-Indus culture pottery. Pottery at Mehergarh from the Period II belonging to the first half of the 4th millennium BCE carries peacock designs (Jarrige 1977). There are innumerable such instances from the Indus culture which indicate that peacock had acquired not only aesthetic but also religious significance. Parpola states: :I would like to suggest that this bird, the peacock covered with many "eyes" or "stars" represents Varuṇa in his "sky garment" of the star spangled night." (Parpola

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1985:71). In the *Ṛgveda* it is above all Varuṇa who is watching from the sky with his eyes (the Sun, Moon and the stars). The Vedic funeral monument is built in the shape of a bird (cf. SB 13.8.3.9). It functions like the bird shaped fire altar with which Prajāpati flew up to the world of heaven (cf. SB 10.2.1.1). Parpola has given peacock figures from the Indus funerary pottery (Parpola 1985: Fig 18 a-h).

Svastika: *Svastikas*, both right handed, left handed and with decorations are painted on the ancient Indian pottery. The *Svastika* pattern is painted on the pottery from Mehergarh since the pre-Indus period and from Mundigak (Casal 1961). There are several patterns of *Svastika* on the Indus pottery, seals and buttons, etc. *Svastika* is the unique symbol which though sacred has no folklore or legend associated with it. In the classical Hindu tradition, which may be traced to a few centuries BCE, *Svastika* stood as a sign for Lord Gaṇeśa (Pandey 1973). It may be said that the word "*svasti*" in the Vedic literature meaning "well being" is represented by the *Svastika* symbol. The grid-iron pattern of town planning on the Indus cities of Mohenjodaro and Harappa may appropriately named after the *Svastika* pattern. As such, there is architectural pattern of house building named after *Svastika*. The symbol still occupies very prominent position in the Indian household. Ladies drawing *Raṅgolī* pattern for decorations start with drawing *Svastika* first. Thus in both the ritual and the household tradition the *Svastika* has occupied unique position ever since the pre-Indus period.

Funeral rites: While in the Near East the royal tombs dotted the land, no influence of the custom was observed in any of the Indus cemeteries i.e. R37 and H etc. The bodies lay extended with head towards the north and legs to the south (Wheeler 1966). This is perfectly in tune with the age-old belief of the south being the direction of the God of death, Yama. According to an old custom in India, a living person is forbidden from sleeping directing legs to the south and a dead body is invariably laid with legs pointing to the south.

Ladies Bangles: The custom of wearing bangles by ladies, adoring the Brahmi bull, etc. still continue to be followed in India ever since the pre-Indus period. There are many such beliefs and customs, which appear to hold, sway on the Indian masses ever since the pre-Indus period till today. Then how is it possible to isolate only the Vedic and the post-Vedic or classical Hinduism from the religion of the Indus Culture people? One regrets that research scholar like Asko Parpola deviates from the very obvious conclusions because of his bias for the so-called Dravidian roots of the Indus culture. Similarly Atre's proposition of isolating the Indus culture from the ancient culture in India becomes irrelevant.

Mother Goddesses, virgins or dolls

Atre points out that the mother goddess statues as found all over in the near Eastern and the ancient European cultures are absent in the Indus culture. The typical nude female

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figurines with protruding breasts, heavy heaps and belly portion, or where pregnancy seems to be the focal point of worship or sanctity are absent in the Indus culture. The female figurines of the Indus culture are not nude. On the contrary they are mostly the statues of shapely young maidens. Apparent contrast between the two types of the female statues can be very easily verified from nearly sixty illustrations presented by Agrawal. Of these the first 19 illustrations are of the typical mother goddess type and found in the Western culture. From the illustration 20 onwards, the ancient female statues from the Indus and the neighboring region are given (Agrawal 1984). While the mother goddess statues in the Western culture are least ornamented, Atre rightly points out that the Indus female statues are invariably ornamented and clothed around waist and point to these being virgins. This trend also continues to the Pre-Indus culture times. The Mehergarh female statues of various periods as arranged by Jarrige also fit into the maiden –virgin pattern rather than the mother goddess pattern. As Atre points out, these statues serve some other purpose because, "the iconography of these figurines is not in a single instance repeated on the seals and sealings which are equally important as a source of Harappan religion"(Atre 1986).

Were these dolls for female kids?

It should be noted that the female statues are of young, slim females, their features and ornaments are appallingly crude. Looking at the artistic skills of the Indus artists, their expertise in carving numerous Indus seals with precision, the most proportionate statues from Harappa which can be envied by a modern sculpture, their skills in painting the intricate patterns on excellently baked pottery and so also the impressionist mode of drawing animals on baked pottery; it is inconceivable that they could have fashioned the numerous female virgin goddess statues in such a crude manner, if those were to be the objects of adoration. But compare them with other toys and toy carts, these are also equally unfinished and crude. The terracotta female statues and the animal toy figures from say Mundigak can be compared for this purpose. Although baked, they were not made very carefully. Wheeler too gives similar figures of terracotta bullock cart, the bulls, hen, dove, cat, etc. along with the figure of a beast looking like a boar covering its mouth with front leg (Wheeler 1966:42-43). He further comments that the makers of terracotta at Mohenjodaro enjoyed a sense of humour, as indicated by the numerous grotesque figurines. Author proposes here that these crudely made figures of the animals and maidens were toys for kids. While making these toys the artists did not pay much attention to make them more attractive or aesthetically good looking. This trend followed till recent times, as late as early fifties and sixties. I remember the baked but crude toys I used to play with, especially on the eve of *poḷā*, when oxen are worshipped annually on the new moon day of *Śrāvaṇa* month of the Indian calendar. Many of these statues were made half bust or made in sitting position on a broad base or pedestal. This is because the kids playing with them could position them easily. Piggot has given figurines of

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women on broad bases from the Kulli culture with lavishly made hairdressing studded with ornaments (Piggot 1961:Fig 9 & P108-109). The modern day kids in India are lucky to have not only variety of toys made of different materials but these are aesthetically made with right features.

Population trends

Considering the population trends, even during the Indus culture period, more than half of the human population must have been that of youngsters below 15 years. There too the survival rate among the female children being higher, more than half the population of kids below 15 years must have been that of the young females. Scholars and the Indus culture experts have overlooked this stratum of society. Up to the age of 12 or so, kids needed some toys to play with. As it has been recalled, till recent times, female child preferred to play with dolls. There are hardly any instances of experts pointing to the female terracotta figurines being toys for girls, especially made for them. There are many of these. The statistics of the female figurines is given by Marcia Fentress: "At Mohenjodaro a total of 136 figures were found and at Harappa a total of 91, female figures numbered 123 at Mohenjodaro and 61 at Harappa, confirming more or less to the expected 2:1 ratio. Male figures were in reverse proportion, 13 at Mohenjodaro and 22 at Harappa (Fentress 1979:102). Fentress too states that there is no conclusive evidence that in the Indus culture human figurines functioned in a religious or ritual capacity.

These were dolls. One can understand that while a male child could go out for playing outdoor games, girls used to play preferably the indoor games, say dolls, or mock family affairs imitating the female folk at home (known as *bhātukali* in Marathi language) till recently, say late fifties or sixties. They liked to play these games till they attained the age of about twelve years. This trend indeed must have been followed even during the Indus culture period. So that apparently very large proportion of female statues can be explained in the light of this social reality that those were dolls for female kids. Head dresses of these female statues indicate the fashion trends in the Indus Culture period.

A question immediately arises as to why these toys were baked, and energy expended. The reason is also apparent. Since these toys and toy dolls were handled mostly by the age group of say 3 – 8 years old kids, those with calcium deficiency could be inclined to suck those toys. Baked toys became hard but harmless for sucking. It was also appropriate that the dolls be of young females with hair dress and ornaments, because the young girls were playing with those toys. These statues must have inculcated in the minds of these girls the ideas of getting prepared for the next step i.e. getting married in future with suitable young men. There is no clue to guess whether in the Indus culture period the girls were married in the early years, but surely the marriage age could not and did not extend much beyond the

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age of onset of puberty i.e. around 14 years. Looking at the population trends and biological activity in the early years of a girl child, human society could not afford to waste the most fertile years of the female members in the society.

It can be concluded that the terracotta female figurines in the Indus civilization were neither the mother goddesses nor the virgin goddesses but they were toy dolls for the young female children in those times. They represented the young maidens out to attract attention of the young males of the Indus culture enticing them with their attractive attire and lady's finger like shapely figures. As Atre has rightly observed the figures of these young females are not to be seen on any of the Indus Culture seals. It can now be understood that they had no religious significance. They were mere toys for the young female kids of that time.

Paśupati seal figures: male or female?

In order to point to the female nature of the central human figure on the Paśupati seals (No. 1) Atre points to the seal of cow woman and horned tiger from Mohenjodaro (Marshall 1931: Pl CXI: 357). The feminine character of the bending human figure with horned headgear can be judged from the protruding breasts in the half bent position. Other reason for the central figure on the seal being feminine is the long plait of the central deity on another seal of Paśupati (Macay 1937: Pl LXXVII no. 222)) and a cylindrical seal from Kalibangan (Thapar 1979: Pl XXIII). According to Atre the scene on the Kalibangan seal shows the ritual of virgin sacrifice.

The above observation by Atre lead us to the following conclusions:

1. Female or a female deity could be shown on the Indus seal with horned headgear.
2. Long plait is indicative of the female sex i.e. it was only the female folk who maintained long plait like the contemporary style of the Indian ladies. The corollary of this being that men did not maintain long hairs but used to have their hair cut, or combed into bun.
3. Female figurines are clothed while the male figurines were invariably nude.
4. As the Kalibangan cylindrical seal depicts, there must have been the custom of virgin sacrifice prevalent in those times.

All these conclusions are examined below.

Horned headgear

Apart from all the Paśupati seals found so far, there is a triangular prism seal from Harappa referred by Parpola where he has given the picture of the three faces of the prism

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seal (After Vats 1940 Pl. 93:305) supplemented with rough sketches based on detailed autopsy copies drawn. In all these figures the human figure is wearing a horned headgear and it is shown to be ithyphallic in nature (Parpola 1981:176-205). Parpola compared these figures with proto-Elamite seal from Susa where it is invariably the bull figures with similar headgears. Ithyphallic nature of the Paśupati seal is dealt in the following section.

As regards the cow woman seal referred by Atre, shows protruding breasts of the bending human figure, but it appears to be phallic also. Thus it is a composite figure i.e. with both the breasts and penis. It has headgear and long tail. The original seal needs to be re-examined without any bias to confirm the present authors proposition in this regard. If one were to go by the bull-man seal alone and Parpola's parallels with the proto-Elamite seals, this seal too should be of a bull-man rather than bull-woman. But it is a very enigmatic figure.

Thus based on the triangular prism seal, the Paśupati seal and the comparison with the proto-Elamite seals, it can be concluded that horned headgear was shown only for a male figure or deity and not for female figure. Even in the Western cave arts, only the male figures were shown with the pair of bovine or cervix horns (Leroi-Gourhan 1968).

There are two more observations that lend further support to the above conclusion. The demon Mahiṣāsura who was slain by Goddess Durgā is always shown with bovine horn headgear and he is male. When the tribal Gond community people in central India perform ritual dance, it is always the male performer who wears the horned headgear and never the female.

Long plaits of males

There are a) two male statues from Mohenjodaro with beard and bun and b) a statue of so-called Priest-King in sitting posture whose head is broken but long curly hairs on the back can be clearly seen (Marshall 1931). There is no single statue or seal showing female figure with long plait. But from their hair dressing, they too appear to maintain long hairs. Thus it can be seen that long plaits are no sure indication of the figure being that of a female. It could be a male figure also.

Female sacrifice

According to Atre, the cylindrical seal from Kalibangan represents virgin sacrifice. First of all, there is doubt whether this seal belongs to the Indus Culture or it is of the Middle Eastern origin. This cylindrical is only of its kind in the whole of Indus seal collection. But the cylindrical seals were a regular feature in the ancient Near Eastern civilizations. This seal

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depicts two separate scenes. In the first part there are two human figures wearing bun and holding spear with blades at top end in their hands. The spear are bent and made into arch over the central figure with long plait. In the next part there is a composite figure of human torso with animal torso attached. Of the three human figures the central human figure is female sacrificial victim according to Atre. This proposition raises certain doubts about the seal.

Looking into the execution procedures at the time of sacrifice, normally those who performed executions of a sacrificial victim used the short weapons like dagger, axe, sickle, etc. rather than the long weapons like spear as shown on the cylindrical seal. Single stroke with the short length weapon could severe head of a sacrificial victim. This was to prevent the victim from being tortured before death. So also the disproportionately long and bent spears could not serve the purpose of killing instantaneously. Thus the spears shown were in no way useful for being used as sacrificial weapons. There is a clear reference to the male sacrifice in the Vedic literature in the story of *Sunaḥśepa* (*Taittirīyasaṁhitā* V.2.1.3 and *Śatapatha brāhmaṇa* XIII.6) but custom of female sacrifice is not mentioned.

It is not that the virgin sacrifice was absent in India. The virgins, especially the young girls were sacrificed before attaining puberty to acquire wealth or lease of life for an ailing person. But these were acts of black witchcraft performed stealthily and not openly. They had no sanction from the society. Also such victims were not offered in sacrifice in fire at altar with due ceremony. While concluding her article, Atre states that "addition of ploughshare and domestic fire which was holy is sufficient to demonstrate the enhanced position of the primitive goddess. The position of modification and alteration at Kalibangan resulted in 'vestal fire' attaining the supreme importance as indicated by the presence of public as well as residential fire altars" (Atre 1986).

Thapar (1973: 264-271) reports that at Kalbangan, no female figurines, neither cult objects depicting deity were found. Under these conditions, calling the fire altars at Kalibangan as 'vestal fire' and the proposition concluding the female-virgin sacrifice needs further re-examination. It will also have to be explained as to how the tradition of female sacrifice in vestal fire suddenly disappeared from India and took root in the Greek tradition after the lapse of nearly 1000 years or more.

Paśupati seals

Terminology of Paśupati seal is applied to those seals in which central figure is sitting in folded legs position with both hands stretched and wrists resting on the knees. There are many such seals reported so far. Some of these are listed below:

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Seal No. 1: Marshall (1931) Vol. II PL XCIV – 420

Seal No. 2: Marshall (1931) Vol. III PL CVIII–VS210

Seal No. 3: Marshall (1931) Vol. III PL CXVI –29

Seal No. 4: Mackay (1938) Vol. II PL LXXVII – 222

Seal No. 5: Mackay (1938) Vol. II PL LXXVII – 235

Seal No. 6: Vats (1940) Vol. II PL XCIII – 303

Seal No. 7: Parpola (1979) has given line sketch of the seal available with the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

Seal No. 8: Meadows and Kenoyer (1995) Fig 9.8

Seal No. 9: Meadows and Kenoyer (1995) Fig 9.10

Seal No. 10: Meadows and Kenoyer (1995) Fig 9.11

In the subsequent years many more seals were reported from these sites during excavations.

In all the above seals the central deity is seated in the identical folded legs posture. Seal No. 3 is identical with Seal No. 4, but engraving on the seal is worn out. Excepting in the Seal No. 4 and 5, the central deity is surrounded by animals. Seal graffiti is clearly visible on Seal Nos. 1, 4, and 5 and partially visible on Seal Nos. 2 and 6. All these Paśupati seals do not in any respect closely resemble the priest king statue as stated by Parpola (1981). The sitting posture of Paśupati is entirely different from that of the priest king.

Cernunnos - Western counterpart of Paśupati

In the Celtic mythology, there is a deity identical with Indian Paśupati. The famous bowl from Gundenstrupp, Jutland carries the picture of the male God Cernunnos shown as Lord of the beasts sitting in folded legs position similar to the folded legs position as that of Paśupati on the Indus seals. He is shown to be holding serpent in the left hand and a circular ring in right hand. He too is surrounded by both the domestic and forest animals. It is worth noting here that Cernunnos is a male god.

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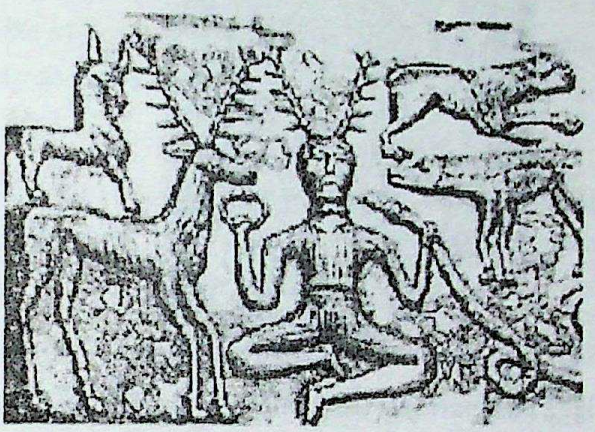

Fig. 1 Cernunnos on the Gundenstrupp bowl

Description of Paśupati seal No. 1

The central human figure is seated in folded leg position with soles touching each other. Animals surround him. Starting anticlockwise from bottom, the first figure is that of a goat (*Apra hircus*) with long horns curved backwards; it is a common species of goat found in the Sind province. It is shown to have turned its head upwards as if it is looking at the central human figure. The next figure is that of a common Indian buffalo (*Babalus bubalis*). Above this figure is a figure of a single horned rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*). In the right hand top corner there is a human figure but it is part of graffiti. Since another human figure is shown on the right hand side of Paśupati figure. There is a figure of an Indian elephant (*Elephas maximux* Linnaeus) in the top left corner with its trunk directed downwards. Then follows the human figure and the last being the tiger (*Panthera tigris*). The bottom left corner is broken. However, in the left off centre mirror image of the goat horns is clearly visible

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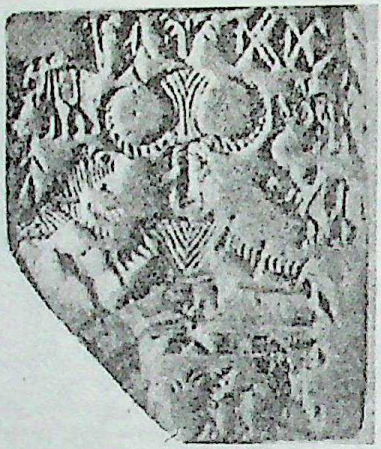

Fig. 2 Paśupati seal from Mohenjodaro

The central figure is highly decorated with ornaments on chest. It is shown with slim torso and waist. The protruding breasts and large belly portion, both the convincing signs of mother goddess are absent.

AV 2.34 and the Paśupati seal

The deity Paśupati is absent in the RV lore. It occurs several times in VS text and in AV text. There is no separate deity Paśupati in VS but it is one of the epithets of Rudra, which again is a Rigvedic deity. He is referred to as Paśupati, Lord of Beasts and Mahādeva as well. In AV too, the term Paśupati is epithet of Rudra. However there is an independent deity and hymn AV 2.34 is devoted to Paśupati. The hymn is ascribed to the seer Atharva. Whitney points out that it was recited during sacrifice of an animal. All the five stanzas of the hymn throw light on the seal. Sāyaṇācārya has commented on the hymn. As is expected, there is no hint of its linkage with the ancient culture in Sāyaṇa's commentary. Translation of the hymn is as per Whitney (1905).

ya īśe paśupatiḥ paśūnām catuṣpadām ut yo dvipadām ।
niṣkrītaḥ sa yajñiyām bhāgametu rāyaspoṣā yajamānam sacantām ॥

AV 2.34.1

Tr.: "Lord of beasts, who rules over (*Īśa*) the cattle, the four footed (quadruped) and who also rules the two footed (biped), let him bought off, go to (his) sacrificial portion, let abundance of wealth attach themselves to (*sac*) the sacrificer."

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As described in the stanza, Paśuapt as lord of beasts is lord of both the quadruped and the biped living beings confirming to the figures present on the seal. The theme could have been incomplete without a separate human being, a biped, as shown below the elephant figure. Thus the human figure in the top right corner is part of the seal graffiti and not the pictorial representation.

pramuñcato bhuvanasya reto gātum dhatta yajamānāya devāḥ ।
upākṛtam śaśamānam yadasthātpriyam devānāmapyetu pāthaḥ ॥

AV 2.34.2

Tr.: "Do ye, releasing (*pra-muc*) the seed of world, bestow success (*gātu*) to the sacrificer, O Gods, who hath brought hither (*upākṛta*) strenuous (*śaśamāna*) sacrificial item (animal), let it go upon the dear path of the Gods."

The central deity is in the state of *phallus erectum* as if he is about to eject semen – the seed of the world. The sitting posture of Paśupati is also significant. He is sitting in *yonyāsana* posture with slight variation. In this Yoga posture, a performer has to fold his legs at knees and arrange soles to face each other making an appearance of pudenda. It is exactly the position of Paśupati. Thus both the part of the human body associated with procreation are shown in figure confirming the epithet of "*bhuvanasya retaḥ*" i.e. seed of the world creation.

ye badhyamānamanu dīdhyānā anvaikṣanta manasā cakṣuṣā ca ।
agniṣṭānagre pra mumoktu devo viśvakarmā prajayā saṁrarāṇaḥ ॥

AV 2.34.3

Tr.: "They, who giving attention to (*anudhī*) the one who being bound (animal), looked after (him) with mind and eyes (i.e. in deep meditation) – let divine Agni at first (*agre*) release them, he the all working, in unison with (*sam-rā*) progeny."

All the animals, except elephant at the left top corner, are shown to be gazing at the central figure. He too can be imagined to be looking at them with mind and eyes. It is possible only while meditating in the Yogic trance. Paśupati looks at his own creation with compassion through omni-spread vision and omnipresent mind in the Yogic trance. All animals around him are also in unison with him. They are looking at him, except the elephant. It can be explained, as it is not a sacrificial animal.

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ye grāmyāḥ paśavo viśvarūpā virūpāḥ santo bahudhaikarūpāḥ ।
vāyuṣṭānagre pramumoktu devaḥ prajāpatiḥ prajayā saṁrarāṇaḥ ॥

AV 2.34.4

Tr.: "Cattle that are of the village, all formed being of various forms pervading the universe (*viśvarūpa*), manifold alike in nature, (i.e. in one form) (*ekarūpāḥ*) – let the divine *Vāyu* at first release them, *Prajāpati* (is) in unison with progeny."

This stanza points to the distinction between the domestic animals i.e. *grāmyāḥ* and the wild or forest animals. While commenting on this stanza Whitney points out that the black YV text TS III.1 is the same hymn except the change in order of stanzas with only one variation in the text i.e. *Āraṇyāḥ* – of the forest – in place of *grāmyāḥ*. This substitution perfectly matches with the animals on the seal. Prajāpati is lord of all the types of animals i.e. domestic and wild as well as all the living beings.

prajānantaḥ prati gṛhṇantu pūrve prāṇamaṅgebhyaḥ paryācarantam ।
divam gaccha prati tiṣṭhā śarīraiḥ svargam yāhi pathibhirdevayānaiḥ ॥

AV II. 34. 5

Tr.: "For knowing, let them first (*pūrve*) receive the breath (*prāṇa*) coming to them forth from limbs. Go to heaven, stand firm with thy bodies, go to paradise (*svarga*) by God travelled paths (*devayānaiḥ*)."

The last stanza ordains the sacrificial animal to travel along the path of Gods. This also explains why the animals are gazing towards Paśupati.

Reference to the rectangular seal

The deity on the seal as described is the Paśupati from the AV and YV lore. Paśupati is one of the epithets of Rudra. VS describes other epithets of Rudra like one with blue neck (VS XVI.8 & others), Great God '*Mahādeva*' (VS XXIX.8). The presiding deity of AV 11.2 is Bhava-Śarva-Rudra all three representing the same God. He is repeatedly referred as Paśupati in AV 11.2, 5, 19 & 24. Thus in due course Rudra-Śiva-Paśupati-Śarva-Mahādeva, all came to represent the same deity in AV and YV lore. Plaits of Rudra are referred in AV XI.2.31. While the AV 2.34 hymn refers to only biped and quadruped animals, the reptiles like snake and crocodile are not mentioned. May be these are not mentioned in the hymn as they are not the sacrificial animals. However all these types, aquatic, amphibians, reptiles

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animals are mentioned in AV XI. 2.24-25. All these animals are shown on the other seals justifying the epithet of Paśupati.

In the later day mythology and iconography till today, deity Śiva-Mahādeva is always shown with cobra around his neck. This association dates back to the Indus culture times as indicated by the seal (Fig. 3). On this seal the central deity is flanked on both the sides by a devotee sitting on either side and a cobra in hood spread manner. Thus the deity Paśupati on this seal is Rudra-Mahādeva in formative stage. As such, the VS points to his blue neck, around which the myth of drinking poison was woven. Or did it already exist even during the Indus culture period? The existing seals do not throw any light on the story of *samudramanthana* of churning of the ocean by the *Devas* and *Asuras*.

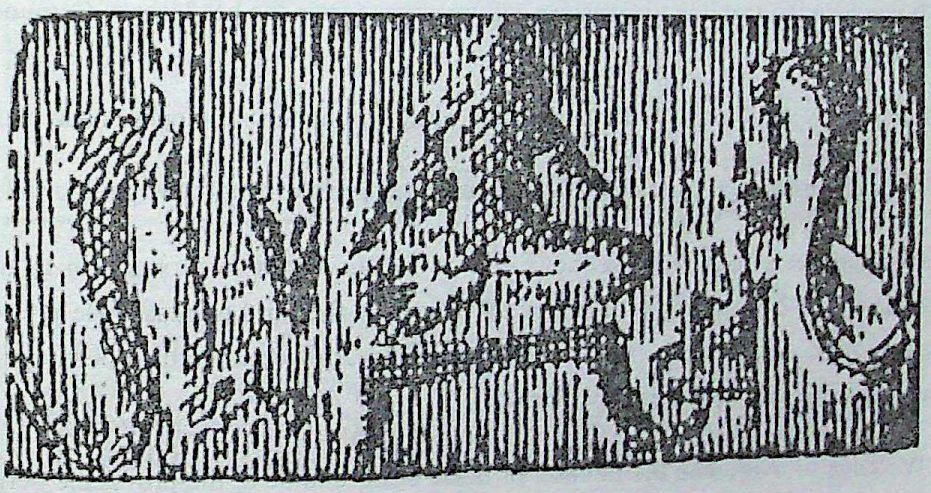

Fig. 3 Paśupati flanked by a devotee and a cobra on either side, from Mohenjodaro

Possible animals in the left hand corner of the Paśupati seal

The most important Paśupati seal is No. 1. It is from Mohenjodaro. Its left bottom corner is broken. Based on the above discussion and comparing with other Paśupati seals, it is now possible to contemplate the possible animal types engraved on the broken corner. The biped animals like bird species and/or reptiles like crocodile or cobra might have been engraved on the broken corner of the Paśupati seal. This is in conformation with the seal No. 7, where the central deity is flanked by fish, crocodile and snakes. His western counterpart Cernunnos too is associated with these animals and he is a male deity. This confirms that deity on the Paśupati seals is a male God and not female i.e. neither Mother Goddess nor the deified Virgin to be sacrificed.

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Conclusions

The methodology of drawing parallels can be successfully applied to the Vedic and post-Vedic culture to understand the Indus seals. So it is correct to correlate AV lore with the Indus Culture.

The Mother Goddess cult as practiced in the West probably did not exist in the Indus culture.

The terracotta female figures from the Indus culture need not be the mother goddess or virgin goddess statues. These were the terracotta toys for the female kids.

Wearing horned headgear was prerogative of a male God, Paśupati, or males in general. It was also the trend in the western culture as seen from the headgear of Cernunnos in the Celtic culture.

Long plaits and bun style of hairdressing was common for both females and males.

The cylindrical seal from Kalibangan does not depict the ritual of virgin sacrifice.

Paśupati seals found in the Indus culture can be better understood in light of Atharvavedic hymn 2.34. Paśupati depicted on the seal is the Lord of beasts. He presides over his creation, i.e. animals of all kinds - domestic, wild, carnivorous, herbivorous, reptiles, amphibians, aquatic and also the human beings.

We have to overcome the mindset of Indus Culture to be of the pre-Vedic period. The hymn is in present tense. Thus AV lore becomes contemporary with the Indus Culture. From one to one correspondance of stanza with pictorial depiction we can conclude that the Paśupati seal is pictorial representation of the AV hymn 2.34.

Men and Tiger Seal as Pictorial Representation of AV 4.3

In ancient times people had to travel long distances through thick forests. In the AV text, hymn 4.3 is a charm against various evils a traveler was likely to encounter. The Men and Tiger seal from Mohenjadro (Mackay 1938: Vol. II PL XC.23), Fig. 1 is one such seal, which is a pictorial representation of the hymn AV 4.3. A person on his way to a long destination could have carried the seal or its terra-cotta impression on his person possibly chanting the AV hymn 4.3.

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The Seal Description

This seal differs in shape from the majority of the Indus seals. It is rectangular in shape and inscribed on both the sides of the seal. On one side is a pictorial representation and the graffiti on the observe side. Starting with the pictorial side of the seal we follow the picture sequence from the left.

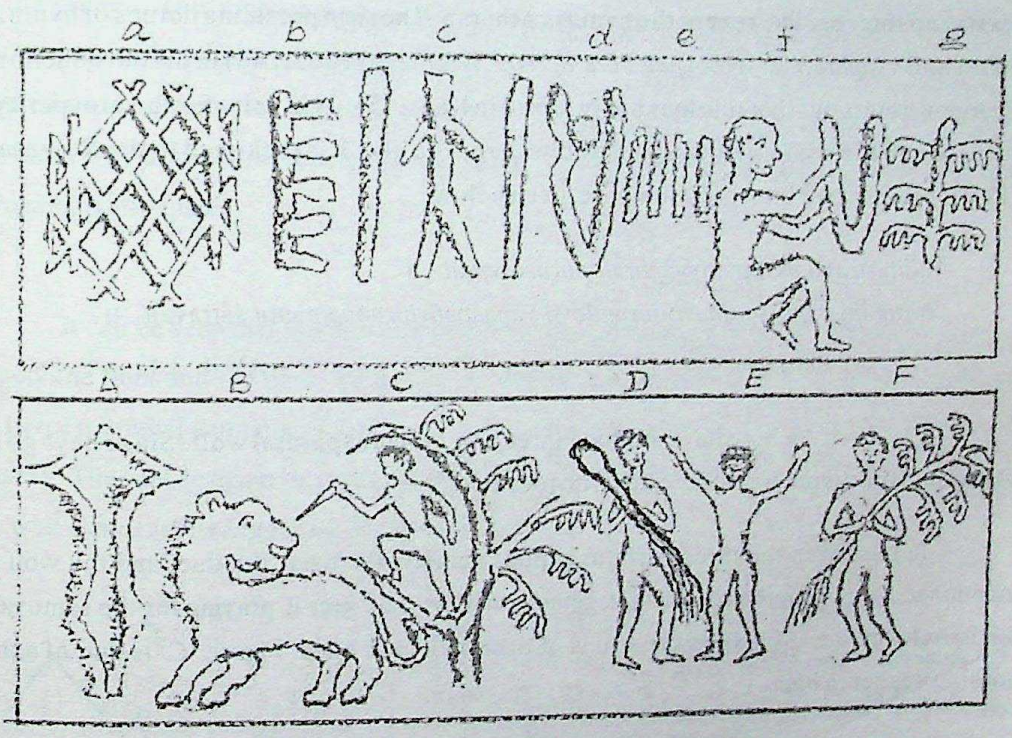

Fig. 1 Men And Tiger seal from Mohenjodaro

Fig. A will be discussed afterwards. Fig. B represents a fierce animal like a tiger (*panthera tigris)* with open jaws. Fig. C is of a human figure with knife in hand and standing on a tree trunk. He has held the knife in a way as if he is about to attack i.e. he is being dangerous. Fig. D is a human figure holding an uprooted tree as the top end is connected to the tree from Fig.C, but it could also be a trident with four prongs at the attacking end. Fig. E is a human figure with both hands stretched. Its head portion is blunted. The human figure E is emaciated compared to the other two human figures, D and F. Fig. F is a human holding an uprooted tree on his shoulder.

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On the observe side is the typical Indus graffiti with sign ' f ' similar to the one classified by Mahadevan (1985:219-266) as Soma consumer Indra. Symbols b, c, d are fairly common. Only the signs "a" and "g" are comparatively rare.

AV 4.3 and the seal

The hymn AV 4.3 was meant to be recited to counter the threats from the wild beasts and thieves. The seer of the hymn is Atharvā. The twin presiding deities of hymn are Rudra and *vyāghra*, i.e. tiger (*panthera tigris).* Whitnery (1905:148) in his introduction to the hymn points out that this hymn is referred in Kaus. (51.1) in a rite for the prosperity of the Kine and their safety from tigers, robbers and the like. It is reckoned to the *Rudragaṇa.* The verses and their interpretations are given below:

uditastrayo akramanvyāghraḥ puruṣo vṛkaḥ ।
hirugdhi yanti sindhavo hirugdevo vanaspatirhiruṅnamantu śatravaḥ ॥
AV 4. 3.1

Tr: "Up from here have stridden three –tiger; man (*puruṣa*) wolf. Since hey! go the rivers hey! the divine forest tree hey! the foes bow."

In this hymn the three harmful entities namely, the tiger, the thief and the wolf are mentioned along with the river and vegetable matter. The seer is praying for the removal of the harmful entities. Fig B on the seal is of tiger with jaws open, Figure 'C' is that of a thief holding dagger in hand.

pareṇaitu pathā vṛkaḥ parameṇota taskaraḥ ।
pareṇa datvatī rajjuḥ pareṇāghāyurarṣatu ॥ AV 4. 3.2.

Tr: "By a distant *(para)* road let the wolf go, by a distance the one toothed rope, by a distant one let the malignant hasten (*RZ*)."

This stanza is mentioning the toothed rope. Sāyaṇa states that the *datvati rajjuḥ* - the toothed rope is a serpent. Whitney also takes it to be a serpent. There appears to be agreement by all the translators on this meaning. It is due to the fact that serpents, especially the poisonous snakes often posed problems by biting animals to death. It is not shown on the seal.

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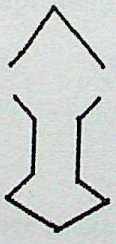
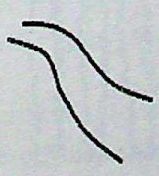
Toothed rope as dagger tied to a rope

It was fairly common in the ancient times that thieves would hide behind the overhead branch of tree on the pathway. They would jump on a single passerby and overpower him with a stroke of dagger. They would tie a dagger with a rope and tie other end to their wrist. It was to ensure that even if the weapon slips from the grip of the holder, it should not drop on the ground. This menace continued till almost middle of the nineteenth century till the British ruthlessly eliminated Thugs. The author is of the opinion that *datvati rajjuḥ* - the toothed rope, refers to the rope tied to the sword or dagger. Fig. C is of a thief hiding behind the branch of a tree with a rope tied dagger in hand. It picturises *parameṇota taskaraḥ* | *pareṇa datvatī rajjuḥ*.

It can be seen that the first two stanzas of the hymn refer to the two harmful entities, namely the thief and the tiger. These are inscribed on the seal. It is felt that the tiger being the fiercest animal and being supreme among the harmful animals, its figure is inscribed on the seal. The seal designer or engraver did not think it necessary to inscribe the lesser animal like wolf (*canis lupus Linnaeus*) on the seal.



Symbol for a mountain and river



Modern symbol for rivers

A river is mentioned in stanza AV 3.1 the symbol A if looked carefully shows that it is divided into two parts i.e. top and the bottom. A professional artist in personal discussion pointed out that a river or water stream is usually represented by two diverging curved lines without sharp angular bends and that it is more or less an established convention. The rivers usually originate in mountains. This is true of the rivers in the Indus culture region. A mountain is schematically shown as a triangle. So the composite symbol A on the seal appears to represent a river or water stream originating in the mountain.

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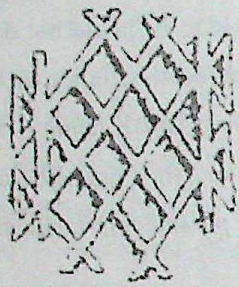
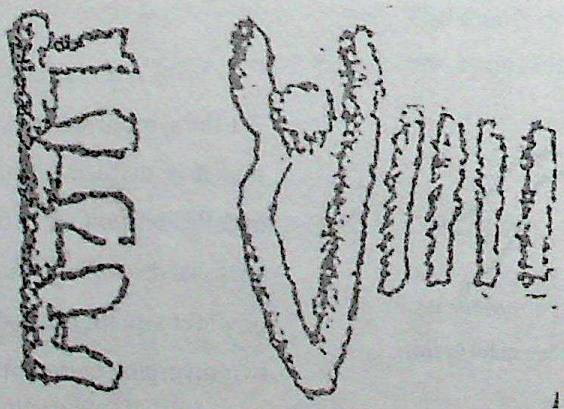
AV 4.3.1 also refers to forest. It is absent on the pictorial side of the seal. On the obverse side is the symbol 'a' an intricate piece of decoration with a number of lines intersecting in a gridiron pattern. It represents a thick forest with many roads criss-crossing where there was possibility of loosing tracks.



Symbol for thick forest

The next symbol "b" is a vertical bar with five pointed nails at right angle. It represents a fierce animal with sharp nailed claws. This will be clear from the symbol "d" and "e" and AV 4.3.3 wherein all the twenty nails are referred. It stands for both the tiger and wolf mentioned in the stanza.



Symbols for sharp nails

The human figure "C" placed between two vertical bars obviously represents a thief confined to custody or prison. The highly developed and commercial Indus culture must have had a law enforcement code and prisons for arresting the culprits.

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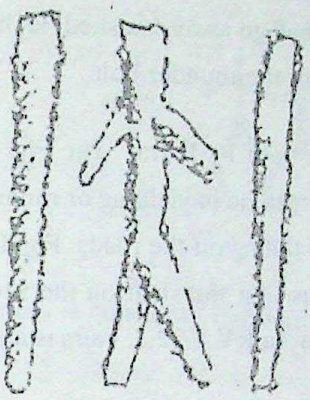

Symbol for a thief, man behind the bars

akṣau ca te mukham ca te vyāghra jambhayāmasi ।
ātsarvānviṁśatim nakhān ॥ AV 4.3.3

TR : "Both the two eyes, and thy mouth, tiger we grind up and all thy twenty claws (*nakha*)."

This stanza clearly mentions twenty pointed nails of a tiger. They are represented by a composite symbol i.e. 'd' represents the sharp nail of a tiger and four vertical lines its four paws. Combining the symbol 'd' and 'e' they represent twenty nails of a tiger symbolically.

Thus it can be seen that symbol A B C and a, b, c, d and e represent sequential representation of the first three stanzas of the hymn.

vyāghram datvatām vayam prathamam jambhayāmasi ।
ādu ṣṭenamatho ahim yātudhānamatho vṛkam ॥ AV 4.3.4

Tr: "The tiger first of (creatures) with teeth do we grind up, upon that also the thief, then snake, the sorcerer, then the wolf."

This stanza states the sequence of eliminating the harmful beings. The tiger has been referred as first of all the creatures, which supports the view expressed earlier. Once the tiger was engraved, the artist did not think it necessary to draw other animals although mentioned in the stanza.

yo adya stena āyati sa saṁpiṣṭo apāyati ।
pathāmapadhvaṁsenaitvindro vajreṇa hantu tam ॥ AV 4.3.5

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Tr: "What thief shall come today, he shall go away smashed, let him go by falling off (*apadhvaṁsa*) of roads, let Indra smite him with the thunder bolt."

This stanza refers to smashing of the thief by Indra. The Fig. E stated earlier is emaciated compared to Fig. D and F. It appears to be in yielding or running away pose with hands thrown side ways. It represents the thief falling off the roads. Fig. D represents Indra, who is praised to smash the thief. It is obvious that the shaft on the shoulder of Fig. D is *Vajra*. It has four pointed prongs at the bottom. In RV 4.22.2 *Vajra* is also described as the one with four sharp prongs.

mūrṇā mṛgasya dantā apiśīrṇā u pṛṣṭayaḥ ।
nimrukte godhā bhavatu nīcāyacchaśayurmṛgaḥ ॥ AV 4.3.6

Tr: "Ruined (*mūrṇa*) (are) the teeth of the beast (*mṛga*), crushed in also (are its) ribs; disappearing be for thee (*godhā*) downward go (*āyat*) the lurking (*śaśayu*) beast."

As a result of charms prepared against them, these beasts are lurking behind the bushes out of fear.

yatsaṁyamo na vi yamo vi yamo yanna saṁyamaḥ ।
indrajāḥ somajā ātharvaṇamasi vyāghrajambhanam ॥ AV 4.3.7

Tr: "What thou contractest (*sam-yam*) mayest thou not protract (*vi-yam*), mayest thou protract what thou does not contract; Indra-born, Soma-born are thou, an *ātharvaṇa* tiger crusher (jambhana)."

This stanza refers to the two masters of *ātharvaṇa*, namely the Indra and the Soma. From the sequence the Fig. "E" is that of Soma personified and he is carrying the uprooted Soma plant. While the roots of the Soma plant are very similar to that of *Vajra* in "D". A tree like figure confirms its plant nature then "F" should represent Indra, the Soma drinker par excellence. He is shown to be holding a glass of Soma juice in his hands. Mahadevan (1985: 233) has identified the symbol as the one offering Soma juice. It represents here the Soma juice consumer, verily the Vedic deity Indra.

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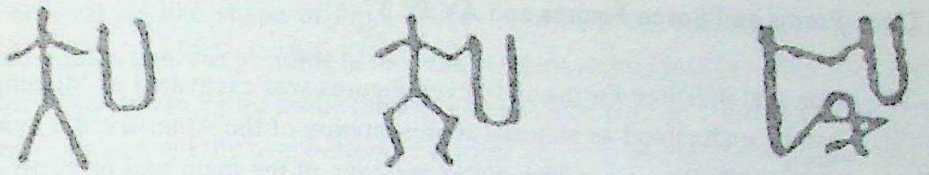
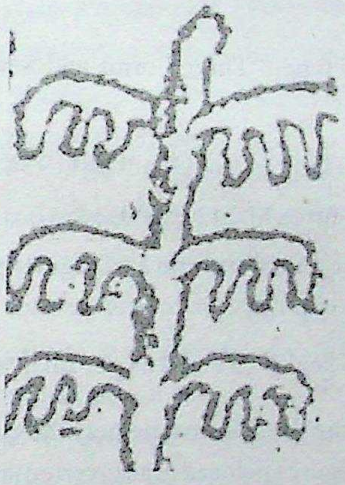


Symbols for Soma consumer Indra as identified by I. Mahadevan



Symbol for Soma plant

The Men and Tiger seal, therefore, represents the complete theme of the hymn AV 4.3. The seal is small enough to be used as an amulet to be worn on the body as a charm.

It is worth nothing that the AV 4.3 hymn composition by the seer is in present tense. It can be concluded that the seal usage was contemporary with the chanting of the hymn.

From the symbols interpreted above it leads us to the conclusion that the Indus script was not alphabetical but ideographic i.e. each symbol on the seal represented a distinct idea or an object.

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Seal of Three Forms and Seven Figures and AV IV.37

The Indus seal of Three Forms and Seven Figures was excavated at Mohenjodaro (DK 6847). It can be understood as pictorial representation of the Atharvavedic hymn AV 4.37. There are other similar seals, which either are copy of the main seal or partly depict the scene on the seal. The hymn AV 4.37 was chanted to drive away the malevolent spirits of Gandharvas and Apsaras with the help of foul smelling plant species of *ajaśṛṅgī* (*Onida pinnata*). The depictions on these seals with three forms and seven or six human figures with long pigtails are identified as pictorial representation of the AV hymn 4.37.

Seal descriptions

There are four seals of this type, "Three Forms and Seven Figures' from Mohenjodaro and Harappa:

1. Three forms and seven figures from Mackay (1938: Pl XCIX)
2. Three forms and six figures M 442 P 109
3. Three forms and pestle and mortar on a triangular prismatic seal M 488 P 119
4. Three forms only M 177 P209

(Reference number of seals 2,3 and 4 as per Joshi and Parpola (1987).

In all the above seals, the three forms, namely the embellished goat, human figure in squatted position and a human figure enclosed in an inverted jar are common; other details vary.

Three Forms and Seven Figures Seal

Among all the four seals, this is the most clear and well-preserved seal. However its top left corner is effaced and some script symbols are obliterated beyond recognition. The Three Forms and Seven Figure seal were excavated in the DK area at Mohenjodaro (No. 6847). It is rectangular in shape. As the seal title indicates there are seven standing figures in a row at the bottom half of the seal. All these human figures have their facial portions more elongated than normal. They appear to be male figures with long beard. All of them have long plaits with a round shape at the end of their plaits as if circular rings are tied to their plaits. All of them are wearing long headgears and garments extending below knee level.

There is a human figure in half kneeling position at the centre of the seal. It too has a long headgear with trident as it is on the Paśupati seal figure. Its plait is thicker. The human

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figure appears to be performing a ritual stretching both the hands towards the human figure under an oval jar like shape of Pipal (*Fucus religiosa*) leaf and twigs. It is as if the half squatted human figure is pleading to the human figure under Pipal jar. There is a stick on the left knee. The human figure inside the Pipal jar has long plait and trident headgear. The tree branches extend from the oval bottom of the jar. The tree species can be easily identified as Pipal. In the middle of the right edge, there is picture of a rectangular pot with two compartments. The right hand side compartment is larger in size than the left. There are many such terracotta rectangular shaped receptacles with two compartments from Mohenjodaro (Mackay 1938:12, 15, 21, 27, 34). The similar rectangular shaped receptacle is used in the Vedic sacrificial ritual of *yajña*. It is known as *sakṣira-praṇītā-praṇayana-pātra*. It is reported in a book on *yajña* implements (Dharmadhikari 1989:16). It has two compartments. Its material of construction is not mentioned. However there is similar pot with single compartment called *praṇītā pātra* (Dharmadhikari 1989:16). It is mentioned that it is made out of clay and used for practicing black magic.

Near the feet of the central human figure, there is an irregular shaped figure with two clear extensions extending downward. The right extension has altered the headgear of the human figure third from right at bottom. Behind the central human figure is the most important figure of an ornate goat. Its neck and hind part are decorated with ornaments. The facial portion and an eye of the goat are not shown normal. Its horns and hoofs help us to identify the animal species. It belongs to the goat species. In the top left part are the Indus script inscriptions. Only four of these are clearly visible. The human figure symbol in the top left corner is partly effaced.

Fig. 1 Three forms and seven figures

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Seal of the six forms and six figures

This seal is reported from Mohenjodaro (Joshi and Parpola 1987:109). It is very similar to the earlier seal with few variations (Fig 2). The six standing human figures in a row appear at the top of the seal. In the earlier seal these are seven. Their appearance is similar to the earlier seal. The half squatting human figure is in bottom left corner. Then follows the ornate goat figure and in the right bottom corner is the standing human figure. Its portion above the waist is removed by a hole punched on the seal. There is another hole between the first and second human figure at the top. The seal is engraved on both the sides. Engraving of the seal is effaced and not very clear, however it can be identified as three forms and six figures.

Three forms and a pestle and mortar on a prismatic seal

This triangular shaped prismatic seal has pictorial representations on all the three sides (Fig 3). The seal impression on a cast (Joshi and Parpola 1987:119) helps us to identify the pictures on the seal. On one side of a prism there is an elephant figure at the left end followed by the left-handed *svastika* sign inside a rectangle. Other two figures are not legible. The figures on the second face are also not very clear. Only a quadruped animal figure at the right can be identified. Others cannot be identified. At the left end there appears to be the Indus sign of grid-iron. The third, the main face of the prism carries five figures. As we go from right to left, at the right end is a human figure enclosed in a jar of like shape of Pipal leaves, the ornate goat looking at the human figure followed by human figure in half squatting position. It has distinct trident type of headgear. The half squatting human figure face is directed towards the human figure inside the jar. The fourth figure near the left end is rectangular shaped with knob like extension arising from the top portion. The present author prefers to call it as pestle and mortar for the reasons given later. The extreme left corner figure is visible but not clearly understood.

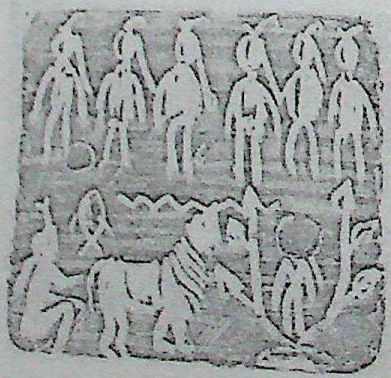

Fig. 2 Three forms and six figures

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Three forms only seal

This seal is reported from Harappa (Joshi and Parpola 1987:209). It is a rectangular seal with Indus script inscriptions on one side and three forms on the other side. The inscriptions are not legible. However the three forms can be seen. The three forms are as inscribed earlier. In the right hand corner is the human figure enclosed in an inverted jar like shape, followed by a human figure in half squatting position. The last figure from the right is of a goat with horns clearly shown as in the first seal described earlier.

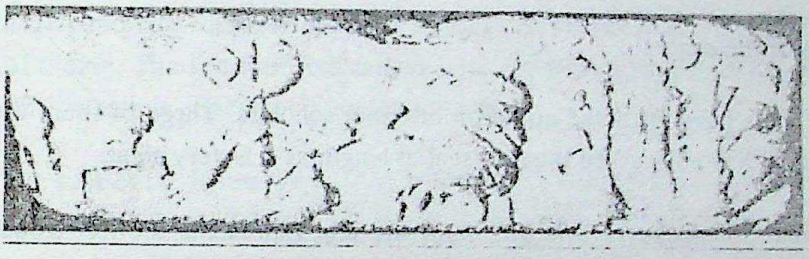

Fig. 3 Three forms and proposed pestle and mortar at the left end

However, there are minor variations. Both the human figures are not shown with typical trident headgear. The jar like shape is inverted and forms full height arch around the human figure. The goat is not ornate.

Distinct features of the seals

Although there are some variations in the seal figure and lay out, there are some common and distinct features of the seals. These are:

a. The three forms namely the human figure inside the Pipal leaf and branch formation, the half squatting human figure and the goat with distinct horns are common.

b. The sequence of three forms starts with the ornate goat figure on the left, followed by the half squatting human figure and ending with the standing human figure inside the leaf twig jar.

c. The leaves on all the seals are that of Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) tree only.

d. The goat figure on the three seals is studded with ornaments, on the fourth seal the ornaments are effaced.

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e. The Pipal leaf jar like shape is in normal standing position in three seals but it is inverted on the fourth seal.

f. While there are seven standing human figures in the bottom half of the first seal, there are six of these on the second seal in the top half part. But their appearance is same with similar headgear.

g. Figures engraved on both the faces of the second seal are identical, but these are legible on one face only. The seal has two holes and no inscriptions.

Interpretations of the seals

These seals have attracted attention of many scholars. Three of them are quoted below. All of them have discussed the first seal at length as it is very clear.

According to Mackay (1938:337-338) the seal represents the tree goddess on a Pipal tree and seven ministrants or deities of lesser mark as shown at the bottom. He does not think of goat in the top left corner being a sacrificial animal. Therefore, the seal does not represent sacrificial ritual.

Buddha Prakash (1966:32-36) has discussed the first two seals. He quotes a *Rc* from the *Ṛgveda* I.164.1 and thinks that the seal represents the theme of the *Rc*. It is representation of the process of creation of the universe. Goat on the seal (*aja*) is unmanifested *Brāhman*. Craving to assume seven forms representing five constituents of matter, mind and life seizes the goat i.e. *aja*. The bottom seven figures represent the seven eternal forms. The engraver has rendered the perception of the ultimate reality by seer of the *Ṛgveda* hymn *Ṛṣi* Dīrghatamas in pictorial form.

According to Asko Parpola (1985:120-121) the circular spot with extensions represent head of an animal offered to the goddess of victory inhabiting the sacred fig tree. Animal to the left is Markhor goat (Sans. *Sarabha*). It is a sacrificial victim that pleases the goddess as much as buffalo. The bottom seven figures represent seven stars of the Pleiades star cluster called *Kṛttikā*.

The common points that emerge from the views of these scholars are as follows:

1. The origin of the pictorial representation is rooted in the mythological traditions in India.

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2. Seven standing figures with headgear have certain significance, i.e. they could be seven seers or seven mothers (*Saptamātṛkā*) or the elements in nature.
3. The prominent figure in the top left corner is a type of goat.

AV 4.37 and the seal decipherment

The seal of three form and seven figures are pictorial representation of the *Atharva*-vedic hymn 4.37 and according to the present author, total scenario represents the central theme of the AV hymn. The hymn contains twelve *Rc*s i.e. stanzas. Out of these the first seven *Rc*s are pictorially represented on the first and the second seal. Other two seals represent the central theme. The last four *Rc*s cannot be correlated; possibly they correlate with the Indus graffiti, which is effaced and not legible fully.

The seer of the hymn AV 4.37 is *Bādarāyaṇīḥ* and the presiding deities are *Ajaśṛṅgī* and *Apsarasaḥ*. The herb *Ajaśṛṅgī* (*Onida pinnata*) was used to drive away evil spirits i.e. *Gandharvas* and their consorts *Apsarasas* from residential places. The present author has referred the text of AV and Sāyaṇācārya's commentary edited by Vishvabandhu *et al* (1960-64) and English translation by Whitney (1905) in the following text.

AV IV. 37 and the seal of three forms and seven figures

tvayā pūrvamatharvāṇo jaghnū rakṣāṁsyoṣadhe ।
tvayā jaghāna kaśyapastvayā kaṇvo agastyaḥ ॥ AV 4.37.1

Tr: "By thee of the old *Atharvans* slew the demons; O herb; by thee Kaśyapa slay, by thee Kaṇva, Agastya."

According to Sāyaṇācārya the *Rc* refers to the plant species *sahamānā*. It is not mentioned in the *Rc*. As the presiding deity of the hymn is *Ajaṣṛṅgī* and also as confirmed later, the *Rc* should refer to it and not to the species *sahamānā* as stated by Sāyaṇa. The *Rc* refers to the ancient seers, namely Atharvaṇa, Kāṇva, Agastya, Kāśyapa. Since the ancient times, the Indian tradition has venerated seven seers, *Sapta Ṛṣi*, and these are mentioned in RV X.130.7 also. At times their names differ but the number seven remains the same. In the AV IV.37.1 though only four names are mentioned, seven are implied and these are pictorially shown by seven figures at the bottom and top of the first and second seal respectively. While discussing the Paśupati seal the author has shown that the long plaits need not necessarily mean that these are female figures. On the contrary the longish faces of these figures represent

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the long beards, which is a general impression about *Ṛṣis* in Indian mind. Out of these seven seers, six are twins and seventh is born by himself (RV I.164.15). Viśvāmitra was that seventh seer who was born from Gods (*devaja*) (RV III.53.9). Thus, the seven human figures in the first represent the tradition of seven seers, the six figures on the second seal point to the tradition of six twin born seers. They are not represented on the other two seals.

tvayā vayamapsaraso gandharvāṁścātayāmahe ।
ajaśṛṅgyaja rakṣaḥ sarvān gandhena nāśaya ॥ AV 4.37.2

Tr: "By thee do we expel (*cat*) *Apsarasas, Gandharvas*; O goat horned one, destroy the demons, make them disappear by (*thy foul*) smell."

'Born from goat horned one' (*Ajaśṛṅgyaja*) in the above *Rc* refers to the fruits of herb species *Ajaśṛṅgī* (*Odina pinnata*). It is a very foul smelling plant. Sāyaṇa points (*Rc* – 6) out that the plant bears fruits with horn like appearance. It is used to drive out the evil spirits by its foul and offensive smell – *sarvān rakṣaḥ piśācādīn tvadīyena ugreṇa gandhena nāśaya adarśanam prāpaya* – destroy all the evil entities (*rakṣaḥ piśācādīn*) with your foul smell and make them disappear.

The ornate goat on the seal with prominent horns extending sideways represents the plant species *Ajaśṛṅgī*, which literally means one "goat with horns". Goats too smell very foul and give obnoxious body odour. The goat figures on all the seals are therefore pictorial representations of the plant species *Ajaśṛṅgī*.

nadīm yantvapsaraso'pām tāramavaśvasam ।
gulgulūh pīlā naladyau 3 kṣagandhiḥ pramandanī ।
tatparetāpsarasaḥ pratibuddhā abhūtana ॥ AV IV.37.3

Tr: Let the *Apsarasas* go to the stream, to the loud down blowing of waters.

Gulgulū, Pīlā Naladī Aukṣagandhi, Pramandinī : so go away ye *Apsarasas*, ye have been recognized.

There are some more plant species with odour mentioned in this *Rc*. These too were used to drive out the evil spirits.

It is possible to visualize the way these plant species were used. To extract the foul smell from these species the easiest approach could be pulping them in water for extracting

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the foul smelling compound. The foul smelling extract could be used to spray it in house and drive away the evil spirits from the living area.

It is confirmed by the position of the central human figure in half squatting position. The fruit of *Ajaśṛṅgī* is kept in front of him for pulping. There is a pestle close to the knee of the human figure and rectangular mortar is so close to the fruit that it as if appears to be part of it. On pulping and mixing with water extract was stored in a bicompartmental receptacle shown at extreme right. Many of these bicompartmental vessels of terracotta were found at Mohenjodaro. The pulping of the plant species is confirmed on the third prismatic seal where in the left corner shape of pestle in mortar is shown.

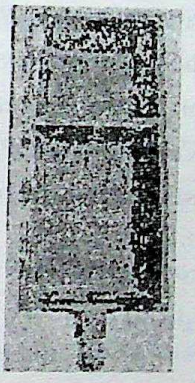

Fig. 4 Bi-Compartmental pot for juice extraction

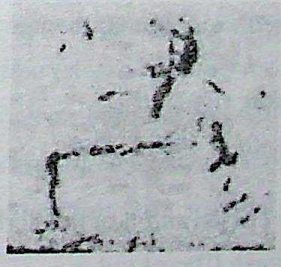

Fig. 5 Pestle and mortar on prismatic seal

On the top of the vessel there is a circular blob representing the end knob of the pestle at the holding end. It is typical pestle-mortar combination to be found in Indian household.

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yatrāśvatthā nyagrodhā mahāvṛkṣāḥ śikhaṇḍinaḥ ।
tatparetāpsarasaḥ pratibuddhā abhūtana ॥ AV 4.37.4

Tr: "Where (are) the *Aśvatthas*, *Nyagrodhas*, the great trees with crest, thither go away, ye *Apsarasas*, ye have been recognized."

It is to be noted here that in the Vedic period, *Gandharvas* and their consorts *Apsarasas* were considered to be fierce, harmful and malevolent spirits. Their abodes were the majestic trees like Pipal, Banyan, etc. Sāyaṇa points out in his commentary on TS III.4.8.4 – *aśvattham tadāvāsaḥ* – Pipal is their abode. Even today, the dead souls, the evil spirits, goblins i.e. *bhūtas* are considered to be holding on to such trees. It is depicted pictorially by a human figure enclosed in the jar like shape of Pipal branches. Pipal leaves are clearly seen on the seal. The human figure inside the Pipal leaf jar represents the evil spirit of *Gandharva* with trident headgear and long plait. The central human figure in half squatting position is as if urging *Gandharva*, an evil spirit to go back to its abode of Pipal tree, as it has been recognized. It also implied for their consorts *Apsarasas* to leave the residence.

yatra vaḥ preṅkhā haritā arjunā uta yatrāghāṭāḥ karkaryaḥ saṁvadanti ।
tatparetāpsarasaḥ pratibuddhā abhūtana ॥ AV 4.37.5

Tr: "Where (are) your swings, green with whitish, where cymbals (and) lute sound together-thither go away; ye *Apsarasas*, ye have been recognized."

By tradition, *Gandharvas* and *Apsarasas* were considered to be expert musicians and celestial dancers and that they lured away human beings to be killed and devoured.

eyamagannoṣadhīnām vīrudhām vīryāvatī ।
ajaśṛgyarāṭakī tīkṣṇaśṛṅgīvyṛṣatu ॥ AV 4.37.6

Tr: "Hither hath come this mighty one (*vīryavantīḥ*) of the herb, of plants, let the goat horned *Ajaśṛṅgī* (and) sharp horned *Arāṭakī* push (them) out.

Commneting on this *Rc*, Sāyaṇa has stated that the plant *Ajaṣṛṅgī* bears fruits with horn like appearance – *śṛṅgākṛtī phale yasya sā*. The plant *arāṭakī* points to *Ajaśṛṅgī*. The fruit of the plant with two horns like extensions is clearly shown in front of the squatting human figure.

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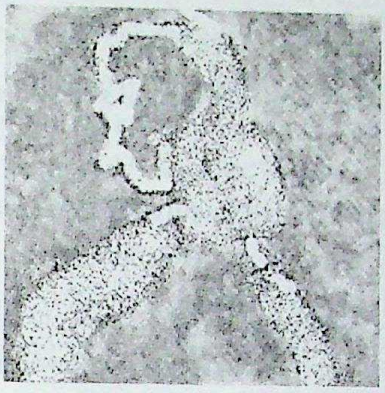

Fig. 6 *Ajaśṛṅgī* fruit with horn like appearance

ānṛtyataḥ śikhaṇḍino gandharvasyāpsarāpateḥ ।
bhinadmi muṣkāvapi yāmi śepaḥ ।। AV 4.37.7

Tr: "Of the hither dancing, crested *Gandharvas*, Lord of *Apsarasas* I split (your) testicles, I bind fast the member."

The *Gandharva* described in *Rc* as crested – *śikhaṇḍinaḥ* is shown by human figure with trident headgear.

The description on the seal can thus be understood as pictorial representation of the hymn AV 4.37. 1-7.

There are total twelve stanzas in the hymn. Of these the last five i.e. 4.8-12 are urging Indra with hundred spiked weapon (*vajra*, though not mentioned) to drive away the malevolent spirits from the residential place for human beings. These are described as *Avakā* (*Blyxā Octandra*) eating *Gandharvas* and *Piśācas* i.e. ghost. As pointed out by Griffith (1985: Vol 1 Pp148) *Avakā* is plant species breeding in water and known as *Saivāla* in later times. In the last two Rcs, *Gandharvas* are urged to keep away from women folk, not to grip (*sacate*) or seduce them, as they have their concerts *Apsarasas*.

These five Rcs do not find pictorial representation. It would mean drawing Indra with his weapon. It was either not drawn or on the small size of the seal it was not possible to accommodate. Because on the prismatic seal, the seven seers are not inscribed although some of these are mentioned by name. The main theme of the hymn is to drive away the malevolent spirits. It is shown on all these seals.

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Conclusions

1. The three forms and seven figures is a special type of seal, which pictorially depict a theme of AV 4.37.

2. There are four such seals from the Indus Culture. They all depict the same theme pictorially.

3. These seals are pictorial representations of the first seven stanzas – *Rcs* – of AV hymn 4.37. The main theme of the hymn is clearly shown on the first seal representing all the items mentioned in the *Rcs* such as i) the Vedic seers, ii) a goat with long horn representing the foul smelling plant species *Ajaśṛṅgī*, iii) its fruit with horn like extensions, v) *Gandharva* residing on the majestic trees like Pipal, v) action of pulping to prepare foul smelling extract and vi) the special pot to store the extract.

4. While the main theme of the hymn AV 4. 37 of driving away the evil entities of *Gandharva* and *Apsarasas* is pictorially drawn, the last five stanzas are not represented pictorially on the seal.

5. Some beliefs and cultural associations, which persist in Indian society even today, like dwelling of evil spirits on the majestic trees like Pipal and Banyan can be traced back to the Indus culture times.

Sacred Bull: The Royal Emblem on the Indus Seals and AV 5.16 and 6. 86

Although the Indus seals carry pictures of various animals, grotesque figures and graffiti, the majority of seals carry a figure of humpless bull with a manger-on-stand in front. According to the present author out of the total count of 2500 seals and sealings, the count of seals with humpless bull with a manger on stand is 1082. The seals are labeled as "Unicorn" seals. They constitute very important clue for understanding the Indus culture.

Earlier Roy (1946) had expressed that the animal on the Unicorn seal being wild ass (*Eqqas asinus*) and treated the horn as fictitious.

Atre has referred to the *Dictionary of Symbols and Imagery* and states that, "It is well- known that animals like bull, goat, deer etc. were closely connected to the Mother Goddess and fertility cults all over the world and it is likely that the unicorn symbolizes some

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Mother Goddess – he can only be caught by a virgin preferably naked, who lures him by her virgin smell; he falls asleep in her lap (often after sexual manipulation) and weeps for joy. The hunters then step out and kill him." According to Atre "The assumption of the unicorn with the Earth or the Virgin goddess can be emphasised by another fact. The female figurines found at Mohenjodaro and Harappa with typical fan shaped headdress and which are suggested to be representatives of the Mother Goddess, differ sharply from matronly figures found at other archaeological sites. These are indicative of virgin deity who presided over the religious cults at Mohenjodaro and Harappa."(Atre 1985: 1-10)

The present author has refuted all assumptions about the Mother Goddess and virginity cult by Atre earlier (Above and in Pathak 1991 a).

The animal on the seals is decisively a humpless bull (*Boss primogenus*) figure. It can be determined by the shape of the body, head, sex organ, hooves and tail. The aspect in which it differs from the normal bull is the single horn, which is the unique feature of this animal. (Fig.1.)

Grigson has also expressed her views that the bull figure is possibly *Bos primogenus*. She has given pictures of the Middle Eastern bulls (*Bos primogenus*) from a relief at Nimrud where the bull with single horn is drawn (Fig.2.). The shape of its horn is very similar to the single-horned bull on the Indus seals.

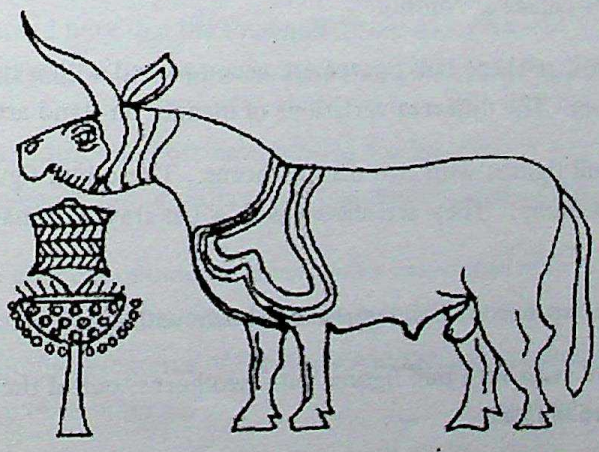

Fig.1. Humpless bull on the Indus Seals

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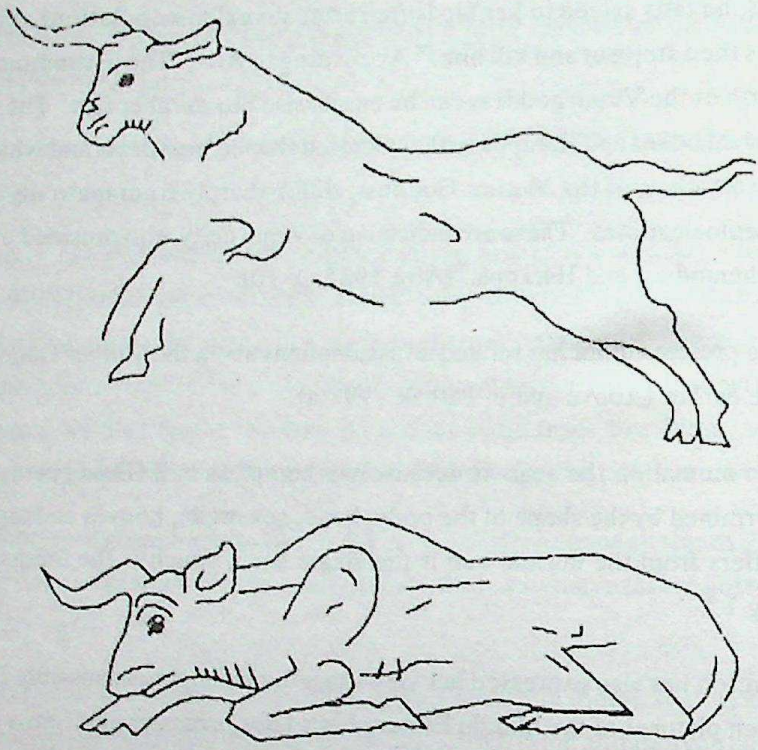

Fig. 2 Bull pictures in profile looking like single horned from a relief of a hunting scene at King Assurbanipal II's palace at Nimrud

More than 90% of these bull figures are accompanied with a figure of manger-on-stand inscribed in front. The different variations of manger on stand are drawn on seals.

There are bull figures with two distinct horns. These bull figures are also shown without a prominent hump. They are shown with a flat tray-like manger on the ground before them.

Some of the two-horned bull figures are shown with a manger-on-stand in front.

There are 89 seals with bull figures with two horns; out of these, 10 bull seals are with manger on stand in front.

There are typical Brahmi bull figures (*Bos indicus*) with prominent humps. All these are with two horns. These seals are 53 in all. Not a single seal of the Brahmi bull carries the figure of manger-on-stand.

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There are seven seals with bull figures shown with multiple heads. Six out of these seals are shown with full body of a bull. One circular seal shows six bullheads up to the neck attached to centre in hexagonal pattern.

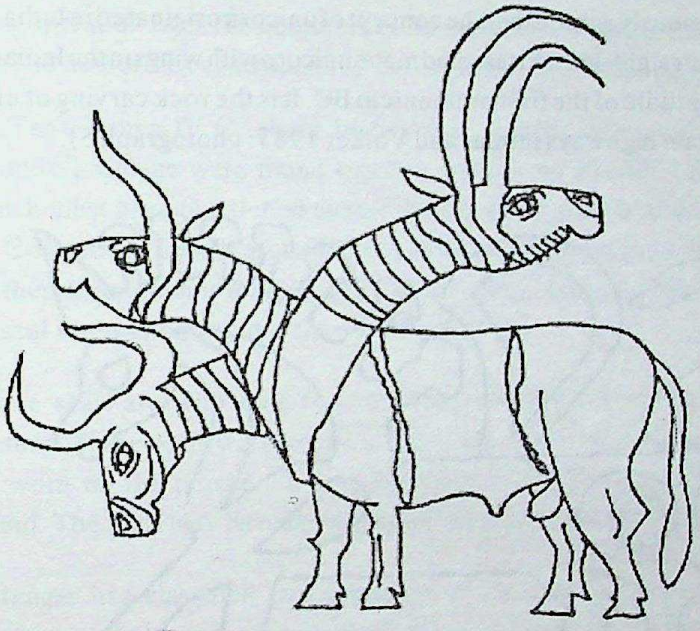

Fig. 3 Multiple headed bull seal from Amri No AI -6

These multiple-headed bull seals are dealt in depth later in this article.

It is to be noted here that the total bull figure seal count is 1231 and it points to the great importance attached to the representation of bull in the Indus culture society.

So far all the earlier authors have labeled the bull figures with single horn to be the unicorn seals. The present author differs with this nomenclature for the following reasons:

1. The concept of unicorn is invariably associated with horse. All the single-horned figures in Indus seals are typically the humpless bull figures. The anatomical features of the horse and the bull are distinct and they differ from each other.

2. The unicorn is usually shown with a straight horn. The bulls on the seals are shown with bent horns.

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3. Unicorns are always shown with tasseled manes without any ornamentation, while the Indus seals are shown without manes and are often ornamented with ring-like or 'W' shaped decoration around the neck.

It is unanimously agreed that the concept of unicorn originated in India. The recorded picture of a typical straight-horned tasseled mane unicorn with wings in the Indian subcontinent dates back to the middle of the first millennium BC. It is the rock carving of unicorn (Fig. 4) along the Karakoram highway (Jetmar and Volker 1987: photograph 5).

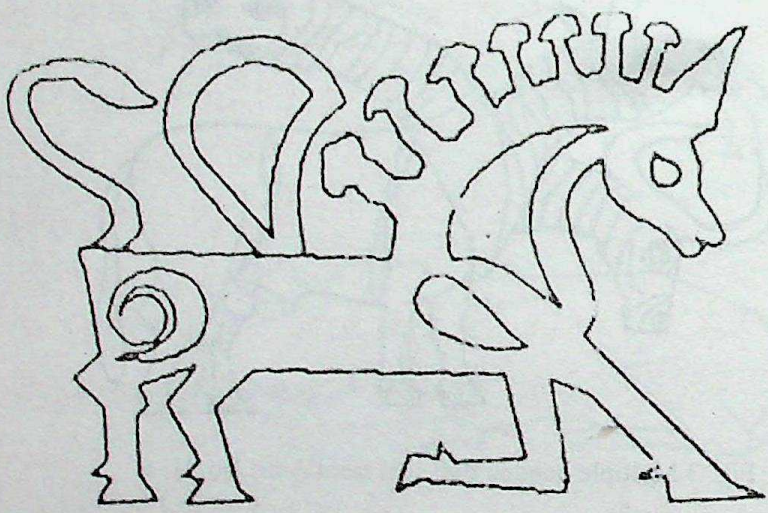

Fig. 4 Horned Unicorn horse with straight horn and wings above the Thalpar bridge along the silk route. Middle of the first millennium BCE

This picture is located above Thalpar bridge and made by pecking Altar-rock. In the European mythology the unicorn was treated as sacred symbol and source of manly vigour.

Taking this into consideration, the present author is of the opinion that it is misnomer to call the Indus seals showing bulls with a single horn as unicorn seals. He prefers to call them the *Sacred Bull* seals for the reasons outlined below.

Central Authority and Governance

It is accepted that Indus culture, which occupied the continental area had a central authority and a governing system. It can be attested from the civic set up, town planning techniques, sanitary system, layout of the city centres like Mohenjodaro, Harappa, Lothal, Kalibangan, Dholavira etc.

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Another important aspect of the Indus culture is long distance trade in various commodities. Many commodities were exported by the Indus-merchants to the Middle East. There was substantial internal trade. It is confirmed by the fact that a uniform system of weights and measures prevailed at many Indus culture locations. The system of weights and measures was in operation over the centuries of its existence implying the strict control by the authorities. The authorities controlled the export trade. It is attested by the fact that:

1. At Tepe Yahya IV C, about twenty-five sealings of typical Susa C ('proto-Elamite') vintage were found together with proto-Elamite tables in a building which must have functioned as storehouse or clearing house. The Tepe Yahya IV C-B period is dated around 3100-2900 BC, which dates to pre-Indus period. It, therefore, implies that antiquity of the governance by authority and practice of seal impression is more than 5000 years old.

2. These seals are with a perforated boss, showing a line of pictographs and a picture. These seals were used for stamping. They were not used as amulets to be worn on the person. It is quite clear, as the seal impressions have been found. The seals may have been used as insignia or identification of the authority.

3. Ratnagar has classified two functions of the sealing, namely, i) commodity sealings, and ii) message sealings. (Ratnagar 1981:188) "By commodity sealings we mean the mechanism by which the contents of jars, packages, baskets or any other type of container were protected and/or guaranteed by certain authorities." The excavations at Lothal further confirm this trend. There is abundance of commodity sealings found in the warehouse area near the dockyard. Seventy-five such sealings have been discovered there. Lothal with a dockyard was an export centre of the Indus civilization times.

4. 'Message seals', which contain only graffiti and no pictures, point to these being used for storing and conveying information. It could be the identity of the sender of a certain message or a piece of merchandise, or the authority on behalf of an individual or state department to an agent with authority for the seal impression.

The present author differs with Ratnagar on the point that all the seals were only used for stamping and not as amulets. He has shown that the famous seals of men-and-tiger (No. M-1425), and seals depicting goat, man, and, man under Pipal canopy (Nos. M-488, M-1186, B-23, H-177) were used as amulets. Here he intends to discuss the significance of the bull picture independent of the graffiti on these seals. It will be apparent from the following discussion that the bull motif was an independent symbol by itself.

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Bull and the Vedic Deities

Bull was considered as a sacred animal in the Vedic lore, especially in the *RV saṁhitā*. There are several instances where bull is epithet of the Vedic deities. Soma is called bull in RV 9. 64.1, 9.70. 7, Agni in RV 1.31.1, 1.79.2 etc.; Indra in RV 1.33.10, 1.54.2 etc. The famous *Rc* describing the Great God appearing among the mortals *maho devo martyām ā viveśa* – (RV 4.58.3) describes him as the bull with two heads. This particular hymn is a very famous. The words for bull i.e. *vṛṣa* and *vṛṣabha* in various forms occur 195 times in the RV *Saṁhitā*. It is to be noted here that although horse-*aśva*-is mentioned in RV several times, it is a carriage animal yoked to the chariots of the gods. Except in two hymns, namely, RV 1.162 and 163, called *Aśvas Ukta*, where the horse deity is praised as god, nowhere else in the RV *Saṁhitā* any god is called the horse. The bull commanded very high respect in the Vedic society as compared to horse.

The Indus seals point to the same trend. So many ornamented bull figures on these seals confirm that the animal was considered sacred and commanded great respect.

AV Hymns V. 16 and VI. 86 and the Sacred Bull Seals

The Atharvedic hymn 5.16 and 6.86 both have presiding deity *ekavṛṣa* –the lone or unique bull. The bull was praised to be the most powerful animal and the consecrated king was urged to possess the power of multiple bulls in hymn AV 5.16 with refrain.

yadyekavṛṣo'si । sṛjāraso'si । AV 5.16.1

Tr: "If you are with single bull power, beget (more power), or else you have no vital power."

In place of *eka*, numerals up to ten are substituted. In the last stanza, the number eleven is given with adverse effect.

yaddekādaśo'si । so 'podako'si ॥ AV 5.16.11

Tr: "If you are with eleven bull-power, (then) you are devoid of vital water (power)."

This strange hymn is one of the mystic hymns from the *Atharvaveda* and was recited at the time of royal consecration ceremony.

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An ordinary man cannot be urged to acquire for oneself the power of several bulls or else remain sapless or inefficient. It was only the person with royal heritage or governing power or a consecrated king who could be urged to possess the power of several bulls, the symbol of strength and metaphor for might.

This is confirmed by another hymn AV 6.86. Seer of this hymn is Atharvan. In this hymn, the King undergoing consecration rituals was praised as having acquired the might of the supernatural and natural objects. This hymn is glorification of a newly consecrated king as pointed by RTHG; the translation of the hymn by RTHG is given below.

The hymn has refrain of "*tvamekavṛṣo bhava*".

vṛṣendrasya vṛṣā divo vṛṣā pṛthivyā ayam ।
vṛṣā viśvasya bhūtasya tvamekavṛṣo bhava ॥ AV 6.86.1

Tr: "This is the Lord of Indra, this the Lord of Heaven, the Lord of Earth,
The Lord of all existing things; the one and only lord be thou."
(AV 6.86.1)

samudra īśe sravatāmagniḥ pṛthivyā vaśī ।
candramā nakṣatrāṇāmīśe tvamekavṛṣo bhava ॥ (AV 6.86 2)

Tr: "The sea is regent of the floods; Agni is ruler of the land. The moon is regent of stars; the one and only lord be thou.'

samrāḍasyasurāṇām kakunmanuṣyāṇām ।
devānāmardhabhāgasi tvamekavṛṣo bhava ॥ (AV 6.86.3)

Tr: "Thou art the king of Asuras, the crown and summit of mankind
Thou art the partner of the Gods: The one and only lord be thou."

Griffith opines that *Asuras* referred to in the last *Rc* are the earthly lords. The consecrating king was vested with the power of Indra. Whichever the rituals performed for Indra while consecrating Him as the Lord of Gods, the same were performed for the king on the earth (*Aitareyabrāhmaṇa* 8.3-4.12-15).

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The present author has shown elsewhere that Asuras in the AV are associated with the river Sarasvatī and possibly belonged to the Sarasvatī river valley (AV 6.100). It was the mainstay of the Indus culture. The time of the spilt between the monotheistic Indo-Iranians and the followers of the polytheistic Vedic religion occurred around the time of dessication of the Sarasvatī river.

If an artist were to represent the concept of *ekavṛṣa* associated with Indra, the lord of gods, the most feasible proposition becomes a bull picture with Soma processing set up in front. This proposition concurs with the earlier proposition about the sacred filter by Mahadevan (1985).

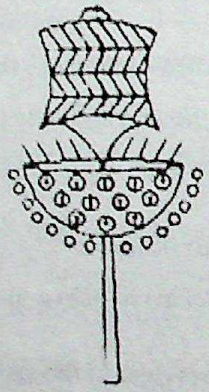

Fig. 5 Sacred Soma filter proposed by Mahadevan

Coming back to the hymn AV 5.16, if it were to be represented by an artist on the seal of the sizes as small 3 x 2-3 cm, he could draw a bull-body with multiple heads as given in Fig. 3.

It is to be noted that the artists who engraved these seals did not distinguish between the image of a sacred bull shown either with single or two horns. These were alternately drawn as on the circular seal (No. M-417).

There are seven such seals. These are listed below (Table 1).

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Table No. 1

Multiple-head Bull seals from the Indus culture

No.	Seal No.	Shape of seal	No.of heads	Single-horned	Double-horned	Remarks
1.	M-298	Rectangular	2	1	1	Fish on top
2.	M-417	Circular	6	1	2	Seal partly broken but could be alternately single horned
3.	M-1169	Rectangular	3	1	2	Graffiti on top
4.	M-1170	Rectangular	3	-	3	
5.	M-1171	Rectangular	3	1	2	
6.	A-16	Rectangular	3	1	2	
7.	M-43	Rectangular	3	1	2	With vertical graffiti

From the survey of the seals, interchangeability of bull figure with single horn and two horns is evident from the fact that just as single-horned bull is shown with a sacred filter in front, so also, the bull with two horns are shown with sacred filter in their front. These seals are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Two-horned Bulls with Sacred Filter in Front

No.	location	No. of seals
1.	Mohenjodaro	6
2.	Lothal	3
3.	Banavali	1

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The above ten seals establish interchangeability of single-horned bulls with two horned bulls. It is obvious that the incidence of royal consecration occurs once in a while and such seals could be engraved on these occasions; hence, they are so less in number. However, looking at the presence of the strong central authority and trading activity of the Indus culture society, the number of royal authority seals out numbered all other type of seals. Over the period of centuries of existence of the Indus culture, the authorities needed a large number of sacred bull seals with a sacred filter in front. These were used for sealing the merchandise with royal approval and insignia. It is confirmed by a few sealings with bull motif and impression of packing material on the reverse.

Thus the bull figure was a royal symbol. The graffiti on the seal changed according to the person in authority, the location and the purpose. A parallel is to found with the Aśoka Pillar lion symbol of the Indian government today. Many people in authority use it for many purposes.

The Bull-Man Seals

The most appropriate representation of these hymns is made on the seal No. M-1224 where a bull-man i.e. a figure with a human face and a body of a vertically standing bull-like figures is drawn on one face of the seal and there is sacred bull on the obverse. It, therefore, becomes evident that bull-man represented the royal person and the single horned bull represented a sacred deified bull representing King of Gods Indra and the royal emblem during the Indus culture period.

Conclusions

1. The "unique bull" symbol with manger-on-stand in front represents the Sacred Bull and Sacred Filter representing the king of gods i.e. Indra and the Soma filter.

2. A King to represent Indra, the king of gods, the royal insignia of a bull figure in profile with single horn was symbolically represented on majority of the seals.

3. Two-horned bull figure with sacred filter in front on some seals point to interchangeability of the bull with single horn.

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4. The single-horned sacred bulls as well as two-horned bull figures were the royal emblems of the Indus culture.

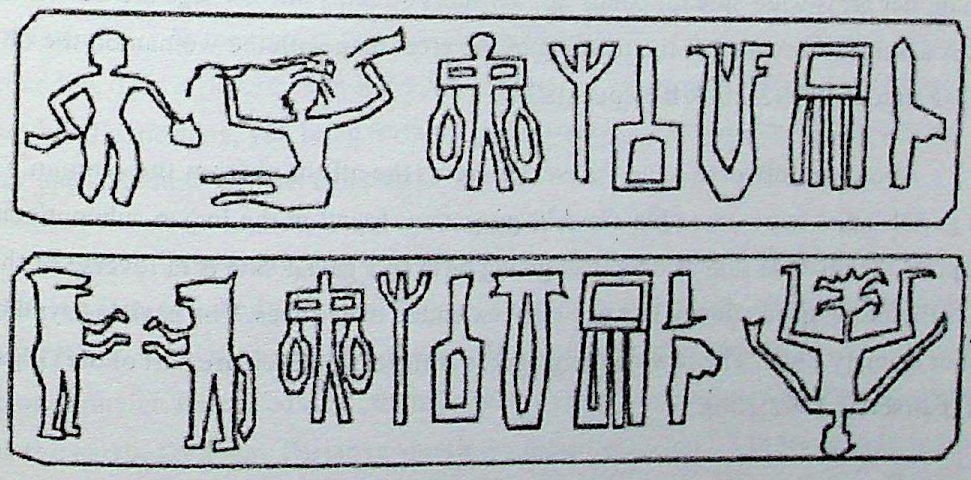
5. The consecrated king vested with supernatural power as described in the hymn AV VI. 86 is represented by the Indus seal of a bull-man on one face and a sacred bull on the obverse (seal No. M-1224).

6. The AV hymn V-16, which describes imbibing the might of several bulls by the consecrated king is represented by the Indus bull seals with multiple heads attached to a bull's body.

Note: Reference to the Indus seals given in the above article are from '*Corpus of the Indus seals from India*' and '*Corpus of the Indus seals from Pakistan*', ed. by Joshi and Parpola, and Shah and Parpola, respectively.

Gaurs and Earth-Woman Seal

As pictorial representation of RV 5.78



[* In-line.

So far the author has shown that many of the Indus legend seals can be understood as pictorial representations of the Atharvavedic hymns. The seal discussed here is pictorial representation of the Rigvedic hymn.

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Descripton of the seal

The seal from Harappa (Vats 1940:304) is rectangular in shape and inscribed on both the sides. On the facing side there are two human figures at the left end. The human figure at the extreme left is holding a dagger or a sharp weapon in right hand and a circular shield like thing in the left hand. It is facing the next human figure in sitting posture with extended legs and both hands raised upwards. It appears to be holding an extended object by both hands. Then follow six signs of the Indus graffiti.

Fairservis's views

Fairservis (1992) has extensively dealt with the Indus symbols and given interpretations of many of the Indus seals. According to him the Indus symbols convey concepts and words of Dravidian language. Fairservis has given the meaning of symbols and their corresponding word and homophone in Tamil. He interprets the facing side of the seal, "Man with weapons: a sphere in left hand, knife held at hip in the right hand. Before him a seated woman, her arms wide spread, palms up, her hairs streams off, her legs are out stretched. This is assumed to represent the meeting of the great man with the woman on the obverse side" (Fairservis 1992:200). It is speculation.

About the obverse side, Fairservis treats the off shoot from the woman's vulva as a gavial i.e. a large crocodile *Gavialis gangeticus* found in the Indian subcontinent. He interprets the obverse side as a woman giving birth to a gavial. She is in reverse of the text and is therefore upside down. Her arms are extended over knees. The gavial is symbolic of First or Primary Chief. The two standing figures at the extreme left are part of the Gilgamesh seal (Fairservis 1992:200).

Author has dealt with the Fairservis's interpretation earlier (Pathak 2001:98). As he has pointed out there is no coherence in this interpretation. Fairservis also does not give any mythical or folklore reference from the Tamil Nadu to substantiate his claims. In absence of any old Tamil reference or myth related to great man meeting a lady or associated with gavial as depicted on the seal it is difficult to accept his interpretation of the seal.

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Views of Richter-Ushanas

Richter-Ushanas (1992:40) treats the Indus seals to be representing the Rigvedic legends. He gives interpretation of this seal as under:

Facing side: "The sitting figure with upraised hands on the upper side of the tablet may either be earth asking for rain or a convict asking for mercy. The man standing in front of him would be Parjanya. He holds a ring or disc in his right hand and in left hand a whip or a sickle. The ring is similar to the ring stones found at Mohenjodaro. They may have been used in processions as wheels of an amphipic car (cf. RV 10.135) rings are also an emblem of Śiva and the *Munis* described in RV 10.136. This is corroborated by a bracelet lately found at Mohenjodaro."

Richter-Ushans interpretes meaning of the graffiti as, "The man with the thunderbolt, the bull, waters, the plant."

About the obverse side he writes, "On the left of the lower side of the tablet two men clad in the skin of a leopard or tiger embrace each other . . . . we may infer that they perform a rain dance . . . . At the right of this side the goddess earth is shown as giving birth to a tree or crocodile. This is described in RV 5.84.2: "You, the separated One, for whom the songs resound in the morning, you bring forth the seed you have received like a neighing horse, O silvery one" (Richter-Ushans 1992:40).

Richter-Ushans tried to correlate the seal depictions with the phenomenon of rainmaking. However he does not offer any cogent correlation between symbols and pictures with the RV *Rc*s and the hymns he quotes. He is not sure whether the sitting person is the earth or a convict. If it is a convict, then the whole purpose of the seal interpretation is lost. If it is the earth, then why Parjanya should be holding a whip? The weapon in the hands nowhere comes near to the thunderbolt of Indra or lightening for Parjanya. The ring he mentions does not serve any purpose, nor Parjanya is connected in any way to a ring. On the obverse side the standing animal figures are stated to be human beings wearing animal skins. They do not look like human beings. On the contrary many of the Vedic Gods are given epithets of animals. In that case, there is no need to speculate it as a mask. The animal figures

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represent the Gods themselves as shown below. The hymns from RV 10.135 and 10.136 Richter Ushanas refers to have altogether different purpose. RV 10.135 is typical description of funeral ceremony of a young person i.e. *kumāra*, while RV 10.136 describes the higher state of fellowship of the deities of the air and the semi-gods status attained by *Munis* while performing penance. Use of the girdle ring becomes irrelevant in context of the pictures on the seal.

Theme of RV 5.78 on the Seal

Author proposes that the theme of the hymn RV 5.78 is depicted on this seal through the pictures. As done earlier, he has not arrived at any correlation with the signs or graffiti with the theme. The presiding deities of the hymn are Aśvin twins. The seer of the hymn is *Saptavadhrirātreya*. There are 9 *Rcs* in the hymn. The theme of the hymn is as follows:

a) The seer invites the Aśvin twins to appear before him or at the sacrificial venue like two swans: *haṁsau iva ā patatam*, or like a pair of deers: *hariṇau iva*, or like a pair of gaurs i.e. *Bovis gauri* : *gaurau iva* (RV 5.78. 1-2). It is to be noted that gaurs do not possess horns as prominent as deers mentioned in the *Rc*. So the twin standing figures shown on the obverse side represent Aśvin twins in Gaur form.

b) As the legend goes, when the seer Saptavadhrī was wailing for help, Aśvin twins came to his help and they rescued him by their magic powers cutting tree into pieces: *vṛkṣam sam ca vi cācathaḥ* (RV 5.78.6). On the facing side, a standing human figure with dagger or sickle like weapon represents one of the Aśvins. The human being in sitting posture with both hands raised is the seer of the hymn, Saptavadhrī. The cut branches of tree are shown above the head of the sitting human figure. So the seer is shown to be wailing or calling for help from Aśvins.

c) A tree, possibly where Saptavadhrī had taken refuge, is requested to open up like vulva of the lady undergoing labour pains: *vi jihīṣva vanaspate yoniḥ sūṣyantyāḥ iva* (RV 5.78.5). It is represented by a tree coming out from the vulva of female lying up side down.

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d) The *Rc*s 7-9 express benedictions for the proper growth of a foetus and to be born unharmed. Sāyaṇācārya called these three *Rc*s as *garbhasrāviṇyupaniṣad* – the liturgy of childbirth.

Griffith commenting on the hymn concluded as follows:

"By *yoṣā nādhamānā* (a wailing woman) (RV 5.78.4) a parturient woman may perhaps Ludwig thinks, be intended. Atri as he descended into a pit, invoked the Aśvins that they might release him as a woman releases a child she bears. A tree – which is much harder and firmed than woman's body unclosed itself when Saptavadhrī invoked the Aśvins. So shall the parturient woman bring forth her child through the help of the Aśvins and at Atri's intercession" (Griffith 1992:278)

Conclusions

1) The seal from Harappa is pictorial representation of the hymn RV 5.78. Theme of hymn RV 5.78 is represented on the seal.

2) Some scholars have labeled it as fecundity seal as it has picture of an object shooting out of human vulva.

3) Aśvin twins called gaurs in RV 5.78.2 are represented by two animal figues standing on the hind legs.

4) Tree opening like vulva (RV 5.78.5) is depicted on the seal.

5) One of the Aśvins is shown holding a dagger or sickle like weapon requied to cut tree braches into pieces. He is shown to have come for rescuing the seer.

6) The seer *Sapatvadhrirātreya* is shown as a sitting human being with legs stretched and hands held upwards. He is as if praising the deity or holding on to the tree branched above his head to prevent from falling into a pit.

7) A pregnant woman or a parturient woman possibly used the seal or its impression as a magical amulet for the safe childbirth.

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PERFORATED JARS FROM THE INDUS CULTURE: COOLERS FOR THE PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS?

ABSTRACT

Several Indus culture sites show presence of perforated potsherds. In some instances full length of jar like perforated pots were unearthed. Excavating archaeologists and researchers on the Indus pottery and terracotta have given some clues about the use of these perforated pots that these were used as heaters, incense burners, strainers, etc. Iravatham Mahadevan has indicated that perforated pots could be the Sòma juice strainer shown in front of sacred bull figures on the Indus Culture seals. But the pots on the Indus Sacred bull seals are invariably semispherical whereas the potsherds found in excavations point to jar like shapes. Author observed 5 – 8% perforated potsherds in some heaps in the pottery yard at Shikarpur in Kachchha during excavations in Feb 2009. He conducted dimensional studies of these potsherds. Back home he got long and small sized perforated jars made by the local potter and conducted experiments on cooling effect on few vegetables and buttermilk. He observed that items kept inside the perforated jars remain at temperatures 5 – 10°C lower than the ambient / room temperature. He proposes that the perforated jars were used as coolers for the household perishable food items in the ancient times.

Introduction

The Indus Culture (I C) potsherds invariably contain fairly high percentage of perforated potsherds. In some locations, like Lothal, Harappa, Rangpur, full pots have been excavated (Picture 1). I have visited some IC sites of Lothal, Surakotada, Khirasara, Dholavira Kotada in Gujrat before 1995. I visited Dholavira way back in 1989 before excavation was undertaken and then in 1992 when excavations were in progress under the directions of Dr. R. S. Bisht. Surface explorations during my both the visits yielded perforated potsherds. Recently in Feb. 2009 I had opportunity to visit the sites of Shikarpur and Kanmer in Kachchh, Gujarat. I was able to locate the perforated potsherds in large numbers at these locations.

The excavation reports of many Indus sites indicate occurrence of perforated pot of different sizes. A full pot was reported from Harappa (Vats 1940: Pl LXII.6), Mohenjo-daro (Mackay 1938: Pl LXII.29), Lothal (Rao 1985), a single piece from cemetery R37 at Harappa (Wheeler 1947: 115), Kot Diji (Khan 1965: Fig 12 items 17 and 21), Bara, Ropar and Raja Sirkap (Sharma 1993: Fig. 13.9, 13.13, etc.)

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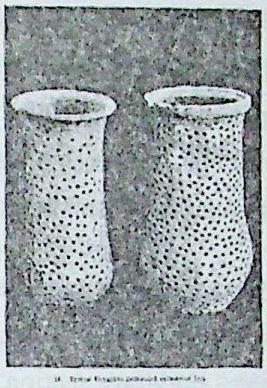

Picture 1: Perforated jars from Lothal in Rao (1985 Plate 18)

On the Use of Perforated Pots

Extensive work on the Harappan pottery was conducted by Manchanda during her Ph. D. work: "A Study of Harappan Pottery", (Manchanda 1969: 131 -136). There are a few books and articles, which exclusively deal with I C pottery and terracotta. These are "*Studies of Indus Valley Terracota*" by Dr. Govinda Chandra Rai (1974), "*Prehistoric Pottery along the 'Lost' Saraswati River of the Great India Desert*", an article by Katy F. Dalal (2005), etc. Some excavation reports and books mention the possible use of these pots. There is only one instance, which possibly indicates the probable use of the perforated pot giving literary reference. Others have made guesses. Iravatham Mahadevan(1984: 219 - 266) has proposed that the perforated pot shown in front of the "sacred bull" seal was a Soma juice filter as described in the 9th *Maṇḍala* of the *Ṛgveda*.

Marshall has written a short note on the perforated vessels found at Mohenjo-Daro: "This type of ware is found in considerable quantity at Mohenjo-Daro, but it is invariably broken owing to weakening due to the perforations. It is noticeable that these vessels are tall and cylindrical in form; dish-like specimen are rarely found. Despite the extreme roughness of their make, they were all shaped on wheel, as is shown by string grooving on their bases. They are generally made of porous paste which burns red in colour and which sometimes contains a little lime or sand, or both. Occasionally they are coated with a cream slip. They are common in the intermediate as in the late period.

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Holes vary slightly in size to suit that of the vessel. They were made by pushing a stick through the damp clay from the outside, and thus a burred edge is left on the inside of the hole. As a rule the stick was pushed in at right angles to the jar (surface), but on occasions the work was carelessly done. In most cases holes of a larger size were punched in the base, the arrangement being a large central hole with number of small holes around it.

No. 9 and 11 are very roughly made by hand with very thick sides. There is one large hole in centre of the base and number of smaller holes is arranged in a single row around the sides. Both were found in Block 3 of the Southern Buildings section, the first at 18 feet and second at 16 feet below the surface.

These vessels I would regard as heaters rather than strainers. Similar ware is a common feature of the ancient pottery of Babylonia, especially in the very early times, though it does not resemble that from Mohenjo-Daro in shape. It has been suggested that these jars were used in Babylonia for straining milk, which seems to have been an important item of diet amongst the Sumerians, but our examples can hardly have been used for this purpose. (Marshall 1931: 313)

Marshall has referred to Aurel Stein's comments on the similar pot in the note on the same page: "Sir Aurel Stein has found identical utensils at some of the Chalcolithic sites of Makrān. A large, complete vessel of this kind was found on a site near Awārān, containing remains of charcoal and ashes. It seems probable; therefore that perforated vessels of this kind were used for heating and perhaps for cooling." (Note 1, Marshall 1938: 313) Since Marshall has made his comments, many others researcher have speculated about the probable usage of these types of perforated pots.

Wheeler reported a specimen, only one of its kind found at cemetery R37 at Harappa: "Type R31 – XLIV (Mackay Type Af), one example, is a tall cylindrical perforated vessel with an everted rim and a large circular hole in centre of the base. It is characterized by two prominent grooves round the neck.....The holes round the body have rugged or blurred edging, made by pushing stick through the sides while the clay was still wet. Only a single example was found in R 37, though this type in various sizes is common in the habitation areas both at Harappa and Mohenjo-daro." (Wheeler 1947:115).

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Manchanda has taken review of the perforated vessels excavated till the time she completed her Ph.D. thesis. She has noted variations in shapes and modifications like rimmed jar, grooves, and bulging in the body etc. (Manchanda 1969:131-136). She points out that the perforated vessels are not peculiar to Harappan Culture only. In fact, these have been found at the pastoral-cum-agricultural sites of the Neolithic-Chalcolithic culture of India and outside. Perforated potsherds are found at locations in Piklihal, Prakash, Ahar, Navdatoli, Chandoli, Sonepur, i.e. indicating widespread use of the perforated vessels. But no complete specimen had been excavated by then. Those specimens were mostly hand made gray or red ware. Also one more important variation was that these were pierced from inside leaving rugged edges on the outside. Thus hand-made perforated bowls were used primarily for milk preparation by the Neolithic people as suggested by Allchin (1960:45). Following the earlier suggestions Manchanda suggested that those perforated vessels could be used as ritualistic incense burner on the analogy of the use of such vessels in south India or simply as brazier as suggested by Stain. They could also be used as lamp shades with a wick or candle burning inside while central hole was used for mounting them on a stick or stand. Manchanda has given the instances of perforated pots from the ancient sites of Tepe-Gawra, Ur in Jamdet Nasr period, From Jamdet Nasr itself, etc. and mentions that they all served as strainers or colanders which could not be so equivocally vouched for tall cylindrical perforated vases of the Harappa type. (Manchanda 1969: 131-136).

Paddaya mentions that the perforated pottery is of common occurrence at the Neolithic sites of southern Deccan in extremely limited quantities and fragmented potsherds are found at those sites. Their exact usage is uncertain. However he has suggested another use for the flat and walled plate type of perforated pot from the usage he witnessed in a village Pamulapadu in Andhra Pradesh. He mentions three uses of the perforated pot as suggested by Allchin, namely a) as braziers for burning essence; b) as cover or lid for milk boiling; and c) for steam cooking of cereals. He has given the procedure for making a paste of cereal; great millet (*Holcus sorghum*) by pounding it and mixing it with water and raw sugar. The walled flat perforated pot is placed on the pot of boiling milk and a lump of paste is placed on it and pressed with fist to pass through perforations. They form macaroni like tubular pieces ranging from 3 –7 cm in length and get cooked. The delicacy so obtained is called *Palatalikalu* (milk tubes) in local Telagu dialect. It is enjoyed on festive occasions. (Paddaya 1969:450-453)

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Ratnagar mentions in connection with the long perforated jar, "Among the shapes are tall, flat based and straight sided jar with large perforations through the walls. Some suggest it was meant for catching fish, others that it was used for burning aromatic substances (Ratnagar 2001:65)

Mcintosh has given a beautiful photograph of a perforated jar from Harappa and she comments: "A distinctive Indus pottery type, the perforated jar; this example comes from Harappa. Such jars are usually found inside large bowls, a combination perhaps used as brewing equipment, with the perforated jar, wrapped in cloth, serving as a strainer" (Mcintosh (2008:312). However, it is to be noted that in the original reports of excavations of the I C sites quoted here in this article, I have not come across any mention of these pots being found inside larger pots.

The suggestions for the use of the perforated pot are summarized as:

These perforated pots could be used

1. As heaters or braziers,
2. For burning aromatic substances,
3. For milk boiling to cover the boiling pot,
4. For Making macaroni like food item from sorghum paste,
5. For catching fish,
6. For brewing say wine etc.

Some On the Site Observations

During my visit to Shikarpur in Feb 2009. Drs. Ajithpràsad and K. Krishnan were conducting excavation at the I C site close to the highway. Initially Dr. Ajithprasad took me round the site and explained the sequence of excavations and possible lay out of the ancient site. In one trench being excavated there were several pieces of perforated pot, broken pieces of possibly the same pot (Picture 2). It appeared to be a fairly large pot.

Then we went to the pottery yard where potsherds from various levels were segregated and marked with location and level. It was there I noted presence of the perforated

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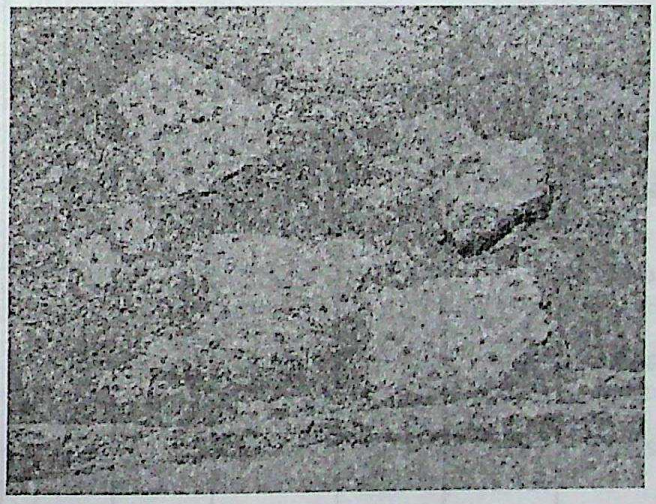
potsherds in majority of potsherd heaps. I observed that many of the heaps contained nearly 5 – 8% pieces of these perforated potsherds. At that juncture it was not possible to correlate the occurrence of perforated potsherds with the type of set up, like household, open space etc. In future somebody should investgate the pattern of location of the perforated potsherds on the various sites excavated so far and confirm whether their frequency is more in the domestic areas or elsewhere. At Shikarpur these perforated potsherds were located in the residential area (Picture 2). This supports the proposition of domestic usage. Considering the occurrence of these potsherds in large numbers and based on subsequent experiments on the perforated jars similar to picture 1, I propose that these pots were used in fairly large numbers by the people of the I C times as domestic coolers for the perishable food items.



Picture 2 Trench at Shikarpur where large collection of perforated potsherds was found

For long time I had question in my mind about the significance and use of these type of perforated pots. With encouragement and active support from Dr. K. Krishnan who made the Vernier caliper, profile marker, foot rule, etc. available, I was able to measure the various dimensions of the potsherds of the measurable size, although small pieces were in abundance. Measurements of the potsherds are summarized in the table below:

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Table 1 Perforated potsherd measurements

SR. NO.	POTSHERD LOCATION MARKS	DEPTH MARKED ON THE POTSHERD	O D OF POT IN CM	THICKNESS OF POT MM	FRONT OD OF HOLES MM	BACK OD OF HOLES MM	CENTRE TO CENTRE MM	ROUGH SIZE OF A POTSHERD CM X CM	REMARKS
1	FP 3 (3)	1.15+55 CM	25	10	6.0-6.5	6.0 – 6.5		5 X 7	HOLES SLIGHTLY INCLINED
2	FP 3 (5) SAMPLE 1	1.15+110 CM	24	15	6.0-6.5	5.0 – 6.0		5X8	HOLES SLIGHTLY INCLINED
3	FP3 (5) SAMPLE 2	1.15+110 CM	18		6.0 - 7.0	5.0 – 6.0		6.5 – 13	HOLES ALMOST VERTICAL
4	EM 12 (3) 130 CM	3.17+102 –	29	11	5.0 – 6.-0	4.0 – 5.0		6X9	HOLES INCLINED
5	FM 12 (5)	4.6, 4.66 CM	35 CM	10	5.0 – 6.0	3.5 -4.0		4.5 X 7	TRIANGU LAR SHAPE 7 CM HT
6	EM 16	3.19+033 CM	55 (NOT RELIABLE)	14	7.0 – 9.0	6.0 – 8.0	15	5X5	HOLES SLIGHTLY INCLINED
7	EM 13 (2)	3.24+24-44 CM	20	12	7.0	6.0	15	7X4.5	HOLES SLIGHTLY INCLINED
8	EM 13 (2)	3.28+55+66	29	13	6.0 – 7.0	4.0 – 5.0	15	4X6	POT OF FINE QUALITY
9	EL 16	2.62 + 89-91	26	10	7.0 – 8.0	6.0	14 -16	4X6	HOLES ALMOST VERTICAL
10	FP6 FK13	BUICK (1)	6 TO 4	12	3		12	6 X3	FEMALE TOY
11	FKP 09	411+1.06 - 149 CM	15	11	6.0 – 7.0	4.0 – 5.0	12 – 20		HOLES RAMDOM
12	EN 15 (2)	2.37M+80 CM	20	12	7.0 - 8.0	5.0	12 – 13	6.5X5	HOLES VERTICLE
13	EM 13 (6)	120 -125 M	22	7	6.0	5.0	12 - 13	3X5	VERTICLE HOLES
14	FK 13	49+168CM	14	11	4.0 – 5.0	4.0		IRREGULAR CIRCULAR	BOTTOM CORNER PIECE
15	EM 12 (6)	4.47M+50-60 CM	22	10	3.0 -4.0	2.0 – 3.0	7.- 8	IRREGULAR	
	DIMENSIONS OF A POTSHERD MEASURED AT KANMER								
16	KANMER	LOT 1031		15	11 – 12	10 – 11	23 -29	6.5X6	

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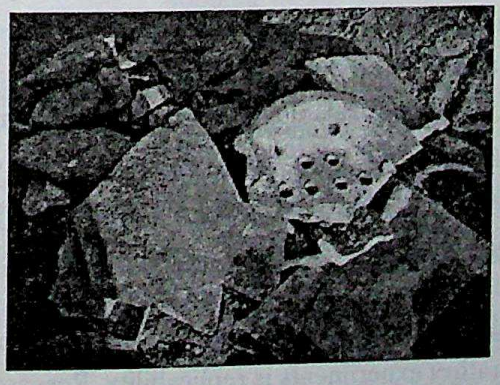
The potsherd in sample 10 appears to be a mini perforated jar as it is given in Picture 3.

Picture 3 Broken piece of mini perforated pot

In this case diameter of holes inside the pot is too small to be measured.

Earlier I had proposed that the female figurines found in I C were the dolls for the female kids of those times (Pathak 1991:57-65). Here I propose that the above small perforated pot with bottom OD of 6 cm and top hole of 1.5 cm ID could not be used for any other purpose than just a toy used by a female child in a family. On the lines of proposing that the dolls found at the Indus sites were toys for female children, similarly these small sized perforated pots were toy coolers of these times like toy freezes of today.

A few kms away from Shikarpur, Dr. Jeevan Kharakwal of Dept of Archaeology, Institute of Rajasthan Studies, Udaipur, was excavating a historical site at Kanmer. In the lower levels at the site, the remains of I C were discovered. I had opportunity to visit the site with Dr. Krishnan. There too I found the perforated potsherds in many heaps. Picture of a gong like perforated potsherd found at Kanmer is given in Picture 4.



Picture 4

Saucer like perforated potsherd found at Kanmer

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Dimensions of the Kanmer saucer like potsherd measured on the spot:

Kanmer Potsherd lot 1032B	
Top dia of the potsherd	150 mm
Bottom dia of the potsherd	83 mm
Height of the wall	45.2 mm
Hole dia on top	7.4 – 7.6 mm
Hole dia at bottom	7.8 - 8.0 mm

Experimental Archaeology on Pottery

James Skibo was involved in ethno-archaeological investigations in the Kalinga people in the Pasil River valley at Guinia-ang in northern Luzon area of Philippines. He conducted some experimental trials on the pottery usage in the village (Skibo 1992). I came across this book during literature survey at the Deccan College library after I conducted experiments at home. Since my observations and logic are supported by his findings, I am quoting Skibo to point to the relevant observations on the I C pottery.

Skibo defines: "Experimental archaeology is the fabrication of materials, behaviours, or both, in order to observe one or more processes involved in the production, use, discard, deterioration, or recovery of material culture. It is theoretically identical to ethno-archaeology, because both sub-fields focus on the interface between material culture on the one hand, and human behaviour, organization, meaning and environment on the other. Moreover, both ethno-archaeology and experimental archaeology have the same objective: understanding the past by addressing questions with modern day material culture" (Skibo 1992:18).

Skibo further mentions the same sentiments I had experienced after I returned back from Shikarpur and Kanmer visits which motivated me to go for experimentation, "Experimentation, like ethno-archaeology, makes a comeback when archaeologist begin to be dissatisfied with mere classification and description. In fact, some of the same individuals had advocated a renewed interest in ethno-archaeology for explanation in archaeology also saw the importance of determining how artifacts were used." Skibo quotes other scholars, namely Julian Steward and Frank Setzler (Function and Configuration in Archaeology, *American Antiquity* vol. 4:4-20. Quoted from page 8) as "archaeological objects would be more meaningful if they were regarded not simply as museum specimens but tools employed by human beings" (Skibo 1992:19). Another very important observation he makes is, "A primary feature of controlled laboratory experiments is replicability. Researchers anywhere should be able to acquire the same materials, perform experiments and attend identical

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results. ..... The results of a controlled laboratory experiment should be in the form of general principles that explain and describe the relationship between a technological property of a material item and the same behaviourally meaningful unit." (Skibo 1992:21-22). It was exactly the same motivation that made me to go for making the perforated pots and experiment with the edible items as described below. As it emerges now, these perforated pot coolers can be used by the population for keeping the edible items fresh in absence or availability of freeze at homes.

Based on the actual usage by Kalinga people, Skibo gives the alterations that can occur in the pottery, what he terms as ceramic alterations: "Ceramic alteration includes all changes in the ceramic (surface or subsurface) resulting from physical or chemical processes that cause either the addition, deletion or modification of material."

Skibo has listed the following marks likely to occur on the earthen pot under usage by the people. i.e. family utensils.

Skibo's Ceramic Alteration Framework (Table 3.1)

	Example	
	Use alteration	No-use alteration
Carbon deposits	Charring of food Sooting from fire	Charring or sooting from unintentional fire
Organic residue	Content of vessel	Organic matter from soil
Attrition	Mechanical action of pottery use, non-mechanical action such as salt erosion or thermal spoiling	Fluvial abrasion, freeze/ thaw breakdown

Proposed usage examined

After knowing the dimensional details of the pots from the Shikarpur site, I tried to analyze the proposed usages summarized in earlier sections:

1. Use as heater or brazier: The possible scenario could that burning coal with little ash is placed inside the perforated pot as source of heat for heating room. The repeated use as heater should result in permanent burning mark on the vessel from inside. In all the samples I observed and handled both at Shikarpur and Kanmer, not a single potsherd carried a burning mark. I also possess potsherd from other sites of Lothal, Dholavir, Surakotada and Khirsara, all located in Gujarat. All these too do not carry

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any burning or soot marks. As a Chemical Engineer having worked on the high temperature exfoliation of vermiculite at temperatures of about 1100 -1200°C, I have my own doubts on the efficacy of 7 - 15 mm thick walled perforated pots as room heaters on account of temperature drop across the wall thickness. But before coming to conclusion I would like to perform experiments taking the surface temperatures and finding the extent of radiation heat loss, which I did as a professional chemical engineer. Let me not rule out the possibility even in absence of potsherds any burning or vitrification marks. Although Aurel Stein has reported perforated pot filled with charcoal and ash from the coastal area of Makrān, the marks of burning or vitrification from inside are not reported. So also it is little difficult to believe that people living in the coastal areas of Makrān needed room heaters or braziers to that extent. The same could be the case for people living in Kachchh area. It is also to be noted that over a period of say few hours, coal ash needs to be blown, and then only the pot could be effectively functioning. In a pot which is 25 -30 cm tall, it will be difficult. However this needs experimental verification. Usually the heaters and braziers are moved from one location to other, say from room to room. In that case large bottom hole with small holes on wall become unsafe for carrying.

2. For incense burner: Usually the incense burners are shallow pots with a handle. As the traditional use in Indian houses or in the places of worship, these are usually taken around while air is blown over the surface for proper and complete burning of the aromatic material. Aromatic material is not allowed to burn but to generate scented smoke. A semicircular bowl reported from Lothal has pedestal and few holes at the bottom could have been used for the purpose of burning aromatic substances. Just because it has holes at the bottom round portion, it can't be called as perforated pot. Secondly, being subjected to both burning coal and smoke, it should carry burning marks soot deposits on the wall. These are not reported. It should now be re-examined. But it could be used as a strainer by just covering the bottom holes with say, sheep wool; it could be used for straining Soma juice with pulp. But bowls of this type are very less in number. Most of the potsherds I measured point to being cylindrical shaped rather than part of the hemispherical bowl. It is also difficult to perceive the tall jars being used as incense burners because most of the smoke will get trapped in the perforations. It would not serve the very purpose of spreading aroma around. The Large perforated pots also weighed heavy and had holes at the bottom. These could be difficult to move around, as is the usual practice.

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3. For milk boiling to cover the milk boiling pot; The only specimen which meets this proposition is from Kanmer shown in Picture 4. But the specimens of this type are rare while boiling milk could be a very normal activity. I anticipate that every household could have such lids thereby reflecting in occurrence in large number. Also the edges of the lid being subjected to soot from the burning firewood, should carry some soot marks. When I checked the piece at Kanmer, it was very clean and showed no marks of soot etc. But my focus was on the perforations and dimensions so I could have missed it. If the perforated lid like this could have been effective in preventing boiling milk from overflowing, ladies especially in India could have continued its usage. But nowhere in India milk boiling is carried out in a vessel covered with perforated lid. Not even the professional confectioners, sweet makers, i.e. 'Halwai' use this type of lid for the milk boiling pot. The potsherd should be examined in light of the present discussion. Another reason to rule out this usage is the cleanliness of the pot. The boiling milk would get absorbed and stick to the perforations and difficult to clean. Very soon it could be spoiled and when used next time it would infect good milk coming in contact. Indian ladies and confectioners scrupulously avoid bringing good milk in contact with soured milk traces for the obvious reason that it could spoil the larger lot.

4. For making macaroni like food item from sorghum paste: As suggested by Paddaya, the only candidate for this type of usage is the item in Picture 4. The tall perforated pots do not meet this requirement. But the author has suggested an alternative use for this type of lid like perforated shape.

5. For catching fish: Tall perforated pots could be used for catching fish as proposed by Ratnagar. But there are two difficulties that come in the way of accepting it. First and the foremost is the weight of the pot. 10-15 mm thick pot after absorption of water would become too heavy to be handled in water. For catching the large fish in the flowing stream, the fishermen use net, which has larger area coverage for fish to get trapped. Compared to that mouth of 20-25 cm diameter is too small for the effective catch.

6. For brewing say wine: Mcintosh has proposed this usage. She also states that these perforated pots were found in larger pots. I have not come across such a description in the excavation reports, so also Manchanda who has given many details of the

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perforated pots too has not mentioned it. So it is speculative. The possible scenario based on the suggestion by Mcintosh is that the perforated pot is kept in larger earthen jar filled with water. The mash for digestion and fermentation is kept inside the perforated pot. It would form heap. The mash filled perforated pot then kept inside the larger pot to complete brewing. Looking at the occurrence of pot, it is inconceivable that almost every household would have a brewing pot.

I have doubts whether 30-40 cm thick heap of mash stacked in perforated pot will ever give proper yield of alcohol. It needs to be experimented. In the current legal framework in India, it will need permission from the Central Excise Department of Government to officially conduct the brewing experiments. It will also be expensive and will need financial support. It is beyond my capacity.

To sum up, all the possible uses of perforated pots suggested so far do not satisfy the actual observations from the potsherds that:

a) The majority of the perforated potsherds are part of the tall cylindrical jars,
b) They are clean with no traces of vitrification or burning marks and soot deposits,
c) They have no black or colored spots to indicate usage as brewing or lid for milk boiling etc.,
d) The inside projections in the samples I observed were fairly intact and the rough surface in the original form indicating that the usage did not need cleaning the inside surface applying say hand pressure leaving also abrasion marks. But this needs to be confirmed by examining several more potsherds and from many locations. It is to be done by the respective excavating institutions re-examining the potsherds excavated.
e) A large hole at the bottom with smaller holes around it indicates need for bottom discharge. It rules out the use as heater as it would become unsafe to handle.

All these observation raised many questions in my mind. It prompted me to go for actual experiments on the perforated pots as described below.

Making perforated pots

After visit to Shikarpur and Kanmer, I went to Ahmedabad where I gave drawing of the small sized perforated pot to a local potter. He made two sample pots for me. The dimensions of the small pot used for the experimental purpose are given in Fig. 1.

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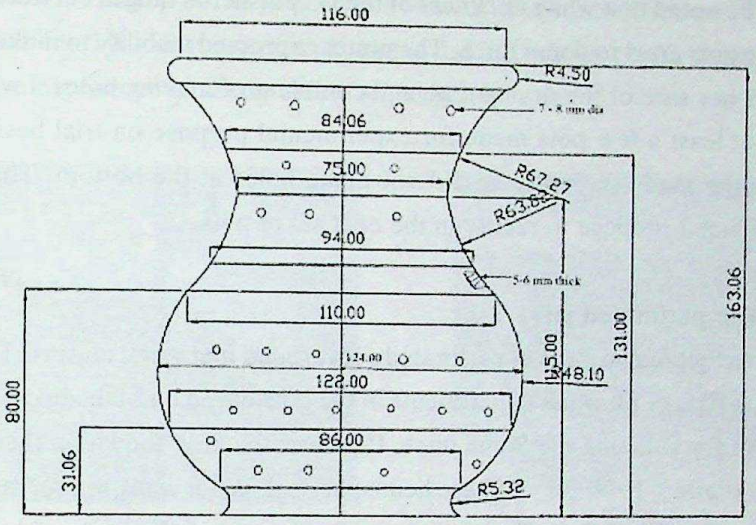

Dimensions of small perforated pot

Fig 1: Small perforated jar used for experiments

After returning to Nasik I contacted a local potter and give him drawing of larger perforated pot. He initially expressed inability to make such a thick pot of 10 -12 mm. Finally after bit of persuasion he agreed to make pots of the larger size but of less wall thickness. I had to do follow up constantly and visit the potter's site. After about a month and half he gave me four pots which were nearly identical. He conveyed me the difficulties he encountered specially while making perforations. He made holes in pots after these were semidried. Out of seven pots he made three were broken while piercing holes. Dimensions of the larger pot are given in Fig. 2.

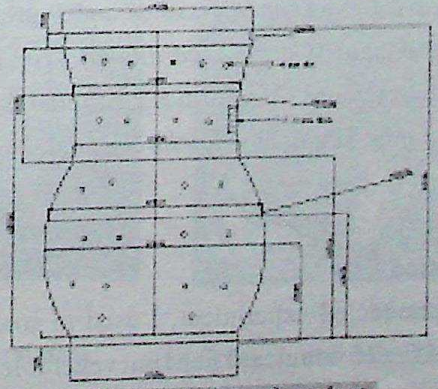

Fig. 2 : Dim of large perforated pot

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It is to be noted that while thickness of the I C potsherds ranges between 7 mm to 15 mm, the sample pots are 5 to 6 mm thick. The potter expressed inability to make thicker pots because he was not sure of the drying time and confident of making holes. I was interested initially to get at least a few pots made for experimental purpose on trial basis as early as possible. When he made the pots, he did not make holes at the bottom. That is a major shortcoming, which I propose to rectify in the next set of pots.

Experiments with perforated jars

I received set of two sizes of perforated pots around first week of April. I was planning to conduct some type of filtration experiments in the pots based on Mahadevan's hypothesis for using the pot for straining the Soma juice. However the pots shown on the sacred bull - *Ekavṛṣa* - seals (Pathak 1999:38 - 45) are hemispherical. Wool was used for straining Soma juice pulped in water (RV 9.7.6). The above set of tall, perforated pots would not hold wool properly for filtration and so I was planning to use a cloth bag fitting the shape inside.

As it is usual practice, whenever we purchase an earthen pot for use in the summer time to get cold water, we soak it 2-3 times and wash it before putting in use. This is done to remove the burnt clay odour. I thought of doing the same with these pots too. I dipped the pots in a bucket filled with water. There was lot of bubbling indicating porosity. I allowed the pot to remain in water for 25 -30 minutes till no more bubbling observed. Then I kept these on the kitchen platform to let the excess water to drain. After about half an hour I checked for complete draining of water. Draining had stopped. I lifted the pot. I felt it much colder that surrounding. It gave me clue that in the I C period, these perforated pots could have been used as coolers for perishable household items. I procured a thermometer measuring up to 50°C and experimented with various vegetables and Buttermilk. I experimented with the solid vegetables like alibanam (*Coccinia cordifolia*) (Toṇḍale in Marathi), French beans (*Phaseoluse vulgaris*), bitter gourd (*Momordica charantia*), leafy vegetables spinach (Pālaka) (*Spinacia oleracea*) and mint (*Pudinā*) (*Mentha Spicata*). I conducted two experiments with Buttermilk.

Experimental Description

Every time I conducted experiment, I used to soak the pot in water till bubbling stopped. It took about 15 –20 minutes. Then I put vegetable in the perforated pot and added water from the top and ensured that the vegetable inside was fully wet and water flowed

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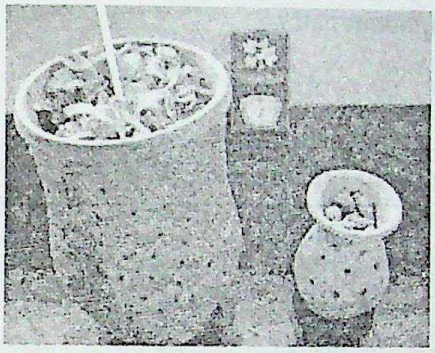
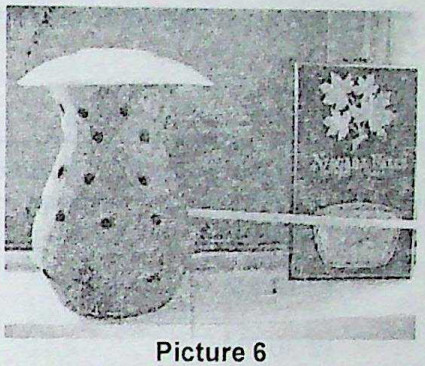
through the holes. The top of the pots was covered with a ceramic saucer. Then I let all the water to drain for 10 -15 minutes and started taking readings with thermometre. Some pictures of the experimental set up are attached below:

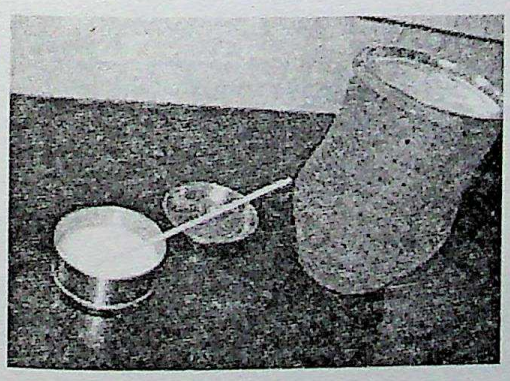


Picture 5
Temperature measurements in large jar

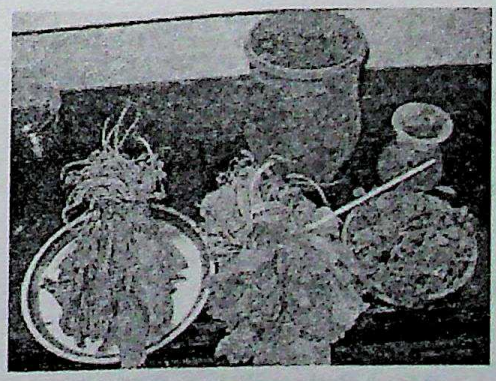


Picture 6
Temperature measurements in small jar

Since there were no holes at the bottom, some water was held in the depressed part at the bottom. In case of experiments with Buttermilk, I took two identical pots of a stainless steel Tiffin box, took equal quantity of buttermilk from the same lot and put one of the pots outside and one inside the large perforated jar. Then I measured the temperature of buttermilk in both the pots at intervals. Results of the experimental measurements are listed in tables below:



Picture 7
Buttermilk experiment in stainless steel pots



Picture 8
Spinach and Mint bundles after 12 hrs experiment

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Experiment 1

Date 4th April 2009

Small pot used. Vegetable used Alibanam, about half kg

Table 2

Sr. No.	*Time of reading ^0C*	*Ambient temp. ^0C*	*Temp. inside ^0C*
1	11.45 AM		26.5
2	12.10 PM		23.0
3	12.30 PM		21.5
4	01.15 PM	31.0	20.0
5	02.00 PM		19.8
6	03.15 PM		19.8
7	04.15 PM	29.5	20.4

It was observed that the temperature of the vegetable actually went down as the time passed till 3.15 PM.

Experiment 2

Date 14th April 2009

Experiment with Buttermilk.

I took Buttermilk in two identical stainless steel pots. One pot was kept outside and other pot was kept inside the perforated pot.

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Table 3

Sr. No.	Time of reading	Ambient temp.^{0}C	Buttermilk temp. in outside pot ^{0}C	Buttermilk temp. in inside pot ^{0}C
1	09.00		19.5	19.5
2	09.10		20.5	20.0
3	09.20		22.0	20.5
4	09.30		23.0	21.0
5	09.45		23.5	21.5
6	10.00		24.5	21.5
7	10.20	27.5	25.0	21.5
8	10.50		25.5	21.5+
9	11.30	28.5	26.0	21.5+
10	12.30	29.0	27.5	21.5+
11	14.05	29.0+	28.0	21.5+
12	15.20	29.0+	28.9	21.9
13	17.00	29.5+	29.2	22.0
14	19.00	30.0+	29.5+	22.0+
15	20.10	29.5+	29.0+	23.0
16	21.00	28.5+	28.5+	23.0+

Experiment 3

15th April 2009

Experiment with French Beans in larger pot.

Experiment started in late morning when the ambient temperature in room was 29^{0}C.

Table 4

Sr. No	Time of reading	Ambient temp.^{0}C	Temp. inside pot ^{0}C
1	12.30	28.5+	24.0
2	13.15		25.0
3	14.35		23.5
4	16.07	29.5+	23.5
5	18.35	29.0+	23.0+
6	19.50	28.5	23.0
8	21.15	28.5	23.0
9	22.30	27.5	22.5+
10	04.50 (16th Apr)	25.0+	23.0

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Experiment 4

21st April 2009

Experiment with leafy vegetables at Night.

Experiment carried out in night time on leafy vegetables. A Spinach bundle was soaked in water and kept in open in a dining dish. Another bundle of roughly same size was soaked in water and inserted in larger perforated pot and a small bundle of Mint was soaked in water and inserted in small perforated pot.

Table 5

Sr. No.	Time of reading	Ambient temp. °C	Spinach temp. in open dish °C	Temp. of spinach in larger pot °C	Temp. of mint is smaller pot °C
1	21.15	28.5	24.5	23.5	23.0
2	22.30	27.0	24.0	21.5	23.5
3	02.30 16th Apr	26.0	23.5	19.5	21.5+
4	05.15	24.5	23.5	19.0+	20.0+
5	06.35	24.0	Spinach bundle appeared to be dry and stale so removed.	20.0	21.0
6	08.55	25.5		19.5+	21.5

In the above experiment the Spinach bundle kept in open dish appeared to be stale by morning, so it was removed around 6.30 AM. The spinach and mint bundles in the perforated jars, middle and right respectively (Picture 8) were taken out at 09.00 hrs. Both were looking fresh.

Experiment 5

30th April 2009

Experiment with Bitter-gourd.

A kilogram weight of Bitter-gourd was kept inside the big perforated jar fully soaked in water. Water was added to the pot and let to drain and then temperatures were taken.

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Table 6

Sr. No.	*Time of reading*	*Ambient temp. ^0C*	*Temp. of Bitter-gourd inside pot ^0C*
1	13.00	29.5+	28.0
2	14.15		25.0
3	16.30	31.5	24.0
4	17.15	29.0	24.05
5	07.15	26.0	24.0
	On 1st May		

Experiment 6

Date 2nd May 2009

Experiment with Buttermilk.

Buttermilk experiment to check the temperature rise from lower temperature. Buttermilk from freeze at 7.0^0C, was taken for experiment. It was kept inside the large perforated pot soaked in water. Idea behind this experiment was to simulate the conditions in desert region where the night temperature falls to less than 10^0C and rises to $35.0 - 37.0^0C$ during the day time.

Table 7

Sr. No.	*Time of reading*	*Ambient temperature ^0C*	*Temperature of Buttermilk ^0C*
1	07.30	24.0	7.0
2	07.42		8.5
3	07.55	25.0	10.5
4	08.07		12.0+
5	08.25		14.0
6	09.05	27.0	17.0
7	10.10	27.5	19.0
8	11.20	29.0	19.0
9	13.45	30.0	19.0
10	16.0	30.0+	19.5
11	17.0	30.0+	20.5
12	18.22	30.0	20.5
13	19.50	29.5	21.0

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Above experiment indicates that the items can be better preserved if kept inside the perforated pot at lower temperature. It could have been the routine in the ancient times to let the edible items to cool at night and keep these inside the perforated pot early morning.

Experiment 7

Date 2nd May 2009

As extension of above experiment 6 the following experiment was conducted overnight. A bundle of Mint leaves was kept in larger perforated pot and about half a kilo of Alibanam was kept in the smaller perforated jar. Both the pots were fully soaked in water.

Sr. No.	*Time of reading*	*Ambient temp. ^0C*	*Temp. of Mint leaves inside the large pot ^0C*	*Temp.ofAlibanam inside the small pot ^0C*
1	20.15	26.5	27.0	26.5
2	21.40	27.0	25.0	23.5
3	22.30	27.0	23.0	22.0
4	03.30 3rd May	26.0	22.0	22.0
5	05.00	25.0	22.0	22.5+
6	06.05	25.5	22.0	—

As both the perforated pot appeared to be dry from outside, water was sprinkled. Some water seeped inside of the pots.

7	08.15	26.5	22.0	21.5
8	11.00	28.5+	21.5	21.5+
9	12.45	29.0	21.0	21.5+
10	15.00	—	21.0	23.0
11	16.45	31.0	21.5+	24.0
12	21.30	28.5+	26.0	27.0

Both the pots were dry from outside at 9.30 PM. When the vegetables were taken out, Mint leaves were wet and appeared fresh. Alibanam was completely dry but it also appeared fresh. It is felt that sprinkling of water around 13.00 hrs could have helped to preserve temperature around 22.0°C.

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The saucer like perforated plate from Kanmer (Picture 4) could be used as cover or lid for the tall jar. In wet condition it could be effectively used to maintain lower temperature inside the pot. In my experiment, I used to cover the smaller as well as larger pot with ceramic saucers. I could not get that type of lid from the local potter.

Conclusions

1) The experiments are indication for possible usage of the perforated jars in the I C period. The large opening at the top facilitated easy access and ease of removal of the material.
2) The temperatures of the items kept inside the jar show tendency to reduce in the beginning.
3) The temperatures of the items inside the perforated jar are observed to be at consistently less than the ambient temperatures.
4) Perforations over the entire height of the jar help inducing upward the draft of air.
5) Lowering of temperature inside the perforated pots can be explained by Air draft. Air gets cooled while passing through the pores. Soaked water evaporates and latent heat of evaporation, drawn from air flow and vegetable item. It results in cooling of material inside.
6) Water sprinkled on vegetables also evaporates to keep the temperatures lower.
7) Lower temperatures can be maintained by frequent sprinkling of water at a few hours of intervals.
8) Vegetables, especially leafy vegetables, remained fresh inside the perforated pots for longer period.
9) Presence of very large numerically large number of perforated potsherds indicated large-scale use, so much so that at many locations, every tenth or twelfth pot could be perforated jar of larger size.
10) It is felt that thicker pots of 10 -15 mm could give lower temperatures for longer interval. It needs to be verified.

Scope for further work

a) The perforated jars made by the potters, are not exactly as per the ancient potsherds, since the firing technique differs. While the ancient potter must have used the dry wood or plants for firing, the modern times potter at Nasik, used rubber tires for firing. The texture of the modern perforated pots certainly differs from the ancient

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potsherds, so also the thickness. The pots made for experiments, are thinner compared to the potsherd thickness in Table 1.

b) Thicker pots of 10 – 15 mm thickness as per the ancient I C potsherds could give lower temperature profile inside the perforated jars, compared to the thinner pots used in the current experiments. These need to be verified.

c) The perforated saucer like cover as shown in Picture 4 could be used for covering the perforated pots. It was not available for the current set of experiments. These may give somewhat different temperature profile, may be on the lower side.

d) The thermometer used for these experiments is less accurate and could not be used for taking the temperature gradient across the height of the stacked vegetable. Modern digital temperature indicator with multiple measuring points can give more accurate results with temperature profile.

e) In personal communication with Dr. Pramod Jogalekar, paleo-biology expert from the Deccan College at Pune, he indicated that the fish bones of the salt water, namely sea born fish skeletons are found at the Indus sites much deeper inland locations. Transport of fish far away from seaport, could not be explained so far. With the indication of cooling possibility, fish transport can be experimented in thicker jars. Further experiments can be performed for fish preservation and transport. However as Dr. Krishnan pointed out the fish bones may have come from a dry fish. It is a way of conserving fish even today.

f) Wheeler has indicated that these perforated potsherds and pots were found in the habitation areas both at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa. This observation can be further confirmed by checking the potsherd locations available with various archaeology departmental collections. It could be verified whether the locations at which these potsherds found in large numbers, to the extent of 5 - 8 %, are the domestic locations and then whether these were used by women folk of I C period as domestic coolers for edible items. Since the potsherds I have checked, did not carry the heating or soot marks, not abrasion marks, the most probable use was as coolers.

g) At locations close to ancient sea shores like Shikarpur, where fish catching could be a regular business, the perforated potsherds in large numbers can verify the proposition by Dr. Jogalekar.

h) There is need to verify effectiveness of the perforated lid in giving lower temperature profile inside the perforated jar. The archaeologist community can surely go for

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more elaborate and detailed experimentation with the expert manpower and technical and instrumental resources at their disposal.

i) The experiments should be performed at the I C sites to verify the proposition.

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Appendix I

VILLAGE NAMES IN SHAHRISTAN DISTRICT STARTING WITH DEH

Reproduced from *Seistan: A Memoir in History, Topography, Ruins and People of the Country* by G. P. Tate

No.	*Name of Village*	*Pagos Ghami & Tahavil*	*Number of Families*	*Kadkhuda*	*Tribe of the Inhabitant*
1.	Deh Amir	3 —	18 5	Under Ibrahimabad	Nuriand Piri
2.	Deh Askari	6 —	86 —	Haidar Ali Khan, Nahrui	Gazma,Nahraui (Baluchis Askari)
3.	Deh Arbat	15 5	210 —	Ali Akbar Arbab Askari	Mir and Arbab
4.	Deh Darrani	1 —	12 —	Sardar Said Khan Nabab	Nahuri, Karimdadzai (Bal)
5.	*Daah Baashi Deh*	1 1	62 —	Under Saddakhi	Shahriari, Ghilzai
6.	Darwesh (Deh)	— 3	26 —	Saiad Haji	Saiad, under Gauru and Mir
7.	Daahtak Deh	6 2	50 —	Mostly ruined Shahraki	—
8.	Deh Gazma	1 —	9 —	Under Sharifabad	Gazma
9.	Deh Gurg No.1	4 —	40 —	Mirza Haidar, Kaini	Kul. K.
10.	Deh Gurg No. 2	2 —	9 —	Gurg Ali, Gurg	Gurg
11.	Deh Haji	— 15	110 —	Ali Akabar, Sarawini	Sarwini, Dahmarda
12.	Deh Khan (1)	3 —	18 8	Mohammed Kakah	Rahdar, Gadah
13.	Deh Khan (2)	3 1	42 —	Sadulla, Mir Shikar	Zaur, Mir Shikar
14.	Deh Khidri	3 1	26 9	Under Chilling	Khidri, Mir Shikar
15.	Deh Kakar	1 —	9 —	Under Khwaja Ahmad	Zardazai (Afghan?) Kakar
16.	Deh Karri	4	21 —	Under Bunjar —	Urmagai (Khurmagai?)
17.	Deh Khalikabad	8 6	84 32	Seiad Ali	—
18.	Deh Kul S.W.	15 —	90 35	Taj Mohammed, Kul	Kul, (S.W.of Nasratabad)

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No.	Name of Village	Pagos Ghami & Tahavil	Number of Families	Kadkhuda	Tribe of the Inhabitant
19.	Deh Kul N.E.	11	100	Mohammed Mehdi, Kakah	Kul Aokati. K.
		2	—		
20	Deh Khan Mohammed	4	28	Taj Mohammed, Kul	Under Jalalabad. K.
		—	—		
21.	Deh Kundil	3	30	Under Khwaja Ahmad	Rakshani, Kasirini, Gorgej
	—	—			
22.	Deh Ibrahim	2	16	Purdil Khan, Sarbandi	Sarbandi
		1	—		
23.	Deh Piran	5	64	Mohammed Mehdi, Kakha	Zauri, Belar, Kamali, Ala Sufi
		2	—		
24.	Deh Pudna	3	18	Purdil Khan, Sarhandi	Pudna
		—	—		
25.	Deh Mashadi Saring	2	22	Amir Daah baashi, Jotegh	Sheikh
		—	—		
26.	Deh Nau	2	10	Mohammed Haidar, Siaksar	Siahsar
		—	—		
27.	Deh Mirza	3	18	Taj Mohammed, Kul	Mirza
		—	5		
28.	Deh Nawab Khan	9	80	Nawab Khan, Gorgej	Gorgej, Shahristani, Rashki
		3	—		
29.	Deh Jafari	1	14	Ghulam Sadddaki	Shahriari, Sanaddgul
		1	6		
30.	Deh Rasul	2	12	Ghulam, Shahriari	Rasulzai (Baluchi or Brahui?
		—	4		
31.	Deh Sheikh (1)	3	18	Fakir, Khammar	Sheikh
		—	9		
32.	Deh Sheikh (2)	2	22	Under Daudi	Khammar, Sheikh Weisi
		1	—		
33.	Deh Siahsar (1)	3	26	Ghulam-i-Shahbaz	Khammar, Saihsar
		1	9		
34.	Deh Saihsar(2)	3	30	Ahmad Kha, Notani	Mulla Shahi, Piri
		1	—		

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VILLAGE-NAMES IN MIAN KANGI DISTRICT STARTING WITH DEH

No.	*Name of Village*	*Circle*	*Kadkhuda*	*Tribe of the Inhabitants*
1.	Deh Dost Mohammed	Jahanabad	Deserted	
2.	Yusuf (Deh)	Jahanabad	Yusuf Rodini	Rodini (Balunch)
3.	Wali (Deh)	Daulatabad	—	Aladau
4.	Mohammed (Deh)	Pulgi	Mohammed, Gurg	Gurg (Farsiwan)
5.	Safar (Deh)	Daulatabad		Sanadgul, Saiad (Farsiwan)
6.	Sikandar (Deh)	Pulgi	Burge-i-Mir	Pahawan (Farsiwan)
7.	Shaharaki (Deh)	Pulgi	Marden, Sharakhi,	Sharaki, Buzi (Farsiwan)
8.	Shekh (Deh)	Deserted	—	—

NAMES OF HAMLETS STARTING WITH DEH IN ILAMIDAR BRANCH OF HELMAND

1. Deh Jahangir	Modern hamlet
2. Deh Ido	Near old town of Jahanabad
3. Deh Luch	Modern hamlet
4. Deh Bahalol	Modern hamlet
5. Deh Gul Shah	Modern hamlet

Kadkhuda – The headman of the village is called Kadkhuda.

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The Pagos: The agricultural community in a village organizes itself into groups of partners who take up land for cultivation. These groups are called *Pagos*. The number of these is regulated by the amount of land, which the Kadkhuda decides to cultivate. The number of *Pagos* in each township circle and in the country at large varies form year to year. *Pagos* are of two kinds *Gahmi* i.e. subject to public, laborious or vexatious (*Gham*) and Tahvil. The former will have to work on any land they may be allocated and wherever is quality of soil and are usually kept within easy reach of their village. The strength of an ordinary of *Ghami Pago* is fixed at 6 men. *Tahwil Pagos* vary form 6 to 10, but the greater numbers of these consist of 7 men.

It is to be noted that there are several other villages and hamlets all over Afghanistan with names incorporating *deh*. It is fairly common term to indicate habitat or villages.

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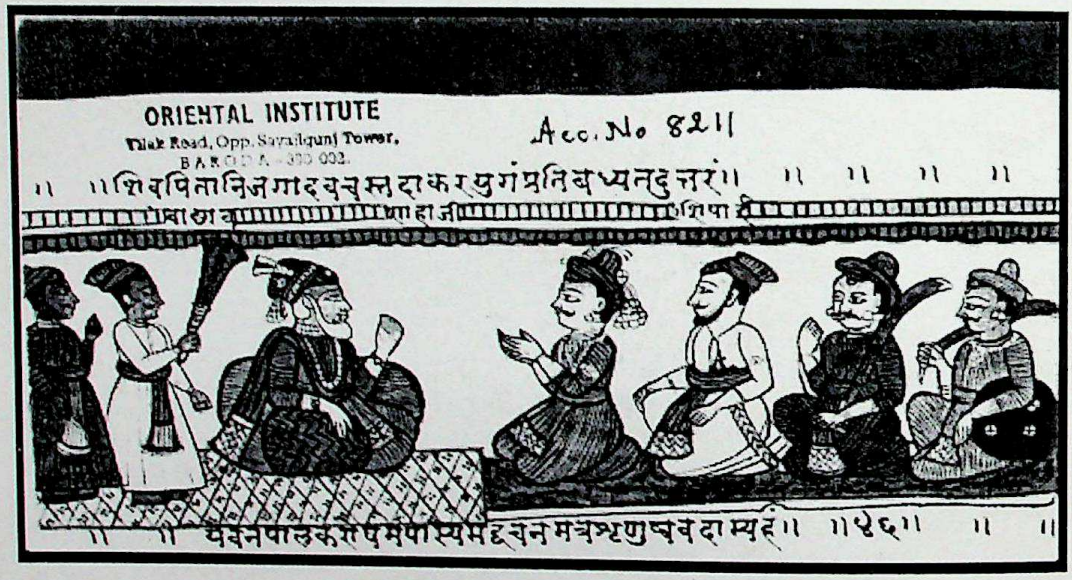

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